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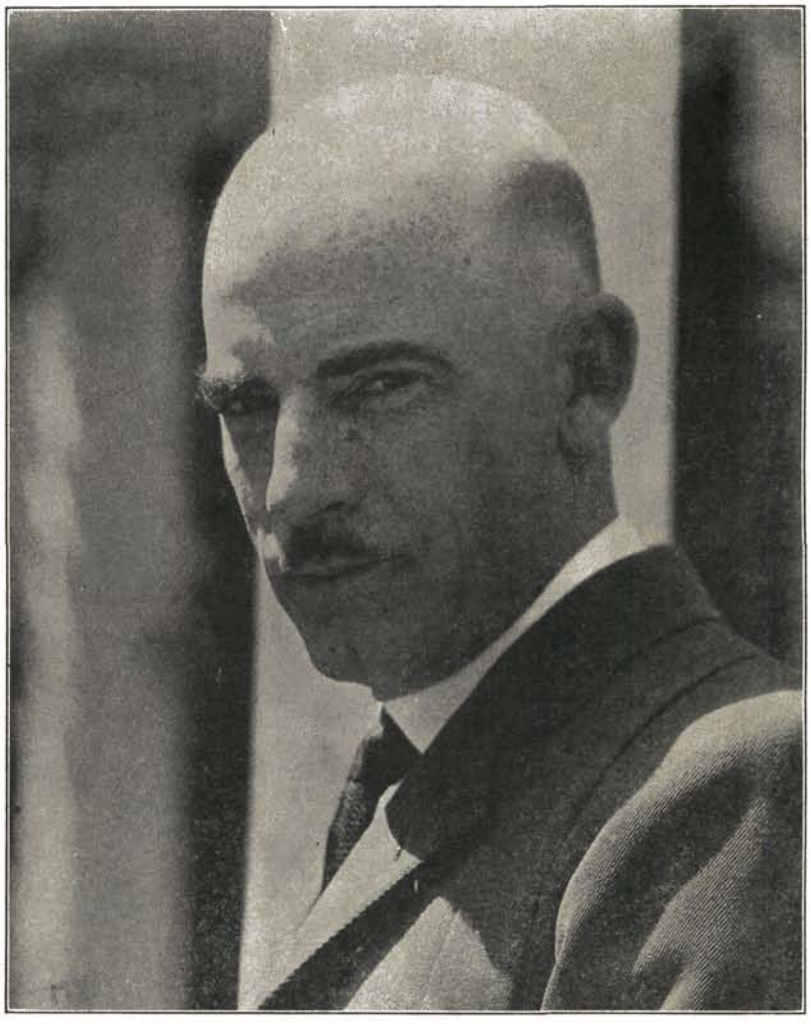

COURTNEY RYLEY COOPER

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"Three out of four of us who live to the age of sixty, we are assured, will live to be victims of crimes 'tantamount to robbery, assault, . . . manslaughter, or murder . . .'"

(See page 5)

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Virginia Woolf and Feminine Fiction

BY HERBERT J. MULLER

VIRGINIA WOOLF

AS I am using the work of Virginia Woolf chiefly as a springboard from which to plunge into disagreeable generalization, simple justice demands a prefatory tribute to her many admirable qualities, and particularly to her real importance to all collectors of the blessed "tendencies" in modern fiction. She is a conspicuous figure in the reaction against a literal, pedestrian realism: a realism that in the light of the new views of personality and consciousness—not to mention the new notions about time and space, cause and effect—seems atavistic or absent-minded. She protests against the neatness, above all the solidity and rigidity of life as represented by an Arnold Bennett. "Life is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged," she writes; "life is a luminous halo." And this halo cannot be rendered by mere inventory or analysis.

Mrs. Woolf is, in short, of the large, significant, often misunderstood company of impressionists, and hence is related to such novelists as Conrad, Lawrence, Joyce, and Proust. She has made it her business to render immediately the actual feel of life: to convey the essence of experience by subtle intimation and not by analysis or comment, by evocation of atmosphere and not by formal narrative, in general by direct realization and not by mere description. The conventional realists, she declares, give "a vast sense of things in general, but a very vague one of things in particular"; and life does not necessarily exist more fully in apparently big than in apparently small things.

> Let us record the atoms as they fall upon the mind in the order in which they fall, let us trace the pattern, however disconnected and incoherent in appearance, which each sight and incident scores upon consciousness.

Hence the minimizing of plot in her novels, as in so much modern fiction. Matthew Josephson once announced that the novel is approaching the saturation point because of the limited number of "situations" available, the sameness of most story material; he finds the chief significance of Virginia Woolf, Joyce, and others in that they are confronting the problem of "how to write a novel without telling a story." But Josephson forgets that the same objection might be made to life itself—yet people go on living, and seem to find life on the whole as strange and exciting as ever. The invincible popularity of the risqué anecdote alone makes nonsense of the notion that we have grown weary of familiar situations. The real reason for the contemporary's exaggerated distrust of "story," his sophisticated contempt for "mere story-tellers," is rather a conviction that neither the whole immensely intricate truth nor the actual sensation of living can be adequately rendered by tidy narratives with a definite beginning, middle, and end. It is an insistence that life itself does not narrate. Plot has gone the way of the other trappings of conventional realism and for similar reasons; the gist of the objection to this realism is that it is not *real* enough.

This central intention explains all the striking characteristics of Mrs. Woolf's methods: the myriad sensory impressions, the stream of consciousness, the deliberate discontinuity, what Gide calls the "breadth-wise cutting" of the slice of life; and all have many parallels in modern fiction. She is especially indebted to James Joyce. "Mrs. Dalloway," the most successful of her novels, is like "Ulysses" the record of a single day; and like Joyce, Mrs. Woolf introduces a host of unconnected characters and incidents. Apparently she has more confidence in the legitimacy of this intention, for she employs none of the artificial devices by which Joyce uneasily sought to unify his scattered material. She is content simply to give the full sensation of living during her day in London; and without the play upon all the human organs that is one of his devices, her novel is more clearly organic. She manages to create a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts and that at every point determines these parts; she establishes a subtle kind of unity and completeness that should satisfy all readers but those who must have a full stop to their symphony, a resounding chord that leaves no doubt as to the propriety of clapping and reaching for one's hat.

Now, almost all readers are impressed by the exquisite artistry of Virginia Woolf. It is revealed immediately in a prose style that has few equals in modern fiction. Always delicate, supple, shimmering, cadenced, it is at once lovely in itself and splendidly expressive. Inevitably one speaks of "nuances," the precision with which she renders the elusive shades of thought and feeling, sight and sound. With so fine an instrument at her command, Mrs. Woolf hence achieves brilliantly the end she set for herself: the imaginative re-creation rather than the formal dissection of human experience.

By her highly selective art, moreover,

Next Week

PUSHKIN
By MANYA GORDON

THE GROWN-UPS
By CATHARINE WHITCOMB
Reviewed by Frances Woodward

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she manages to skirt the more obvious dangers implicit in her methods and materials. She filters and canalizes the stream of consciousness, presenting a vivid illusion of the life of the mind that is more meaningful than a literal reproduction; she gains all the advantages of intimacy and immediacy at the minimum cost of triviality, irrelevance, incoherence, or mere messiness. Above all, she does not explore consciousness and record sensation for its own sake, as Joyce does. Her stream flows somewhere and does not simply flow; if she presents no dramatic struggle and resolves nothing, at least she refers the sensations of her leading characters to fundamental problems of conduct—the problem of the meaning of their lives with which they are all intensely preoccupied.

Finally, one should be grateful for the mellowness of Mrs. Woolf—a mellowness, unlike that of some of her British contemporaries, neither self-conscious nor premature. She is one of the few important literary personalities of this unquiet age that seem in no way maimed or poisoned by it. Her art is no sublimation of her private woes or compensation for her private frustration. Although novelists today are less prone to a cold hatred of their characters than they are reputed to be, none remains on more affable terms with his characters while yet keeping so clear of them. She has all the easy familiarity of the great Victorians without their habit of taking liberties with it. In short, her fiction like her criticism consistently displays a spirit serene, tolerant, humane, civilized.

So much at least must be granted Virginia Woolf. She is on one of the forefronts of modern fiction; she is one of the most distinguished of living women writers. It seems almost ungracious, indeed, to point out deficiencies in so urbane, charming an art. Yet serious deficiencies there are; and her very eminence sharpens the issue raised by her work.

What finally impresses me in Mrs. Woolf's fiction is its insubstantiality. This exquisite art somehow grows thin, this "luminous halo" somehow grows wraithlike. Her novels have nothing of the elemental force of Dostoievsky, Hardy, or Dreiser; among their own impressionistic kind they have little of the intensity and glow of Conrad, Proust, or Lawrence. Behind all their subtlety and vividness is no real passion or energy. With her unfailing acuteness Mrs. Woolf has stated exactly the limitations of the art of Arnold Bennett; Bennett was himself as just when he remarked, with masculine bluntness, that her novels "seriously lack vitality."

This deficiency is in part the price of her method and creed. To "record the atoms as they fall," to "trace the pattern . . . which each sight and incident scores upon consciousness," is inevitably to give disproportionate emphasis to separate moments, and hence likely to leave an effect of inconsequence. Mrs. Woolf flits about her subject, throws a flashing light from many angles, darts in to capture bright bits of truth; but by the very nature of this method she never comes to grips with a situation. She does not confront steadily a deep emotion or really plunge into it. A brilliant butterfly, swift in flight, she settles unerringly on the choicest flowers and extracts their choicest essence; but she never gets to the roots. Hence even the lovely style—dipping, sparkling, rippling, at any given moment a marvel of expressiveness—ultimately palls. The constant flutter and glimmer becomes monotonous; at the end it suggests preciosity or mere fussiness.

Similarly Mrs. Woolf pays the penalty of her too constant immersion in the inner life. In reacting against the excesses of laborious documentation, she has contracted a kind of horror of externals. Too often the reader is straining his eyes at a mist. In actual experience, the halo that is her constant concern surrounds a solid, earthy substance; but of this substance she gives us only fleeting, sidelong glimpses. Hence, as Elizabeth Drew remarks, "we feel rather as if we were trying to construct the plot of a Greek play from nothing but the remarks of the chorus." Fragile and anemic to begin with, her characters come finally to seem disembodied spirits—wispy, evanescent, despite their spiritual essence perishable. And this refining away of the solid substance of character becomes even more fastidious in the later novels of Mrs. Woolf. "Mrs. Dalloway" is set against the living background of London; in "The Waves" the outside world fades into a backdrop, leaving six minds quivering in a sensitized vacuum, six characters in search of an author: an author to give them flesh, blood, dress, a home, a world —anything to clothe their precious spirits.

What sucks the blood out of Virginia Woolf's novels is not entirely, however, this ultra-refined technique. Even her early, more conventional novels, written before she had arrived in this rarefied realm where material circumstance is a kind of vulgar illusion, are wanting in vitality. They are less memorable, in fact, than her later novels, and plainly suggest that her later manner is more natural and becoming to her. And so one must look into her temperament, her whole equipment as a novelist, to discover the final explanation of her limitations.

In reviewing "To the Lighthouse," Conrad Aiken paid a poet's tribute to the old-fashioned fragrance of Mrs. Woolf's spirit, the odor of old lavender that comes off her work despite the ultra-modernity of her technique and her insight. Her characters are all gentle folk framed in a beautiful little picture in cloistered gallery; and this tightly circumscribed scene is what gives her novels "their odd and delicious air of parochialism, as of some small village-world, as bright and vivid and perfect in its tininess as a miniature: a small complete world which time has somehow missed." Here is the charm of her work—and it is much the charm of Mrs. Gaskell's "Cranford." Here is also the reason why it is little more than charming. As creatures of shelter, her characters are too delicate to participate in a really big or intense drama. They never have to worry about vulgar necessity or the intrusion of rude, elemental emotion. They hear only as off-stage rumbles and rumors the great, terrifying, destructive forces of the outside world—as Clarissa Dalloway experiences the World War, a very horrid thing for a lady to have to think about. Their struggles come to seem a shadow-boxing in a hot-house. "I am all fibre. All tremors shake me," declares one of the six soliloquists of "The Waves." "I dance. I ripple. I am thrown over you like a net of light," says another. "Now," declares less fortunate phantom No. 3, "I will wrap my agony inside my pocket-handkerchief." This is an almost complete summary of the perfected art of Virginia Woolf. These are indeed children speaking, but when they are grown up as ladies and gentlemen their accents are as highly mannered, their responses as tremulous, their feelings as refined. None has an emotion that cannot be wrapped up in a pocket-handkerchief.

This is not to say that Mrs. Woolf is herself tender-minded and merely genteel—she clearly sees through her Mrs. Dalloway. Neither is it to deny her the right to her materials—the world is infested with Mrs. Dalloways. Yet one may fairly comment that out of such material at most only minor classics can be woven. In the world she has chosen to create,

(*Continued on page* 14)

Postscript

BY JOSEPHINE W. JOHNSON

FOR there are times when we must take
The quiet poison of a fact,
Swallow it and go on;
—The will to live
Being unfortunately more strong
Than any pain.

And if the outraged tissues of the heart
(Being made of flesh, not law,
And subject to acid and the acid's fire)
Burn down and blacken into ash,
We may console ourselves with this:
All the proprieties were kept,
And no one pained.

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Rats, Lice, and Mystery

HERE'S TO CRIME. By Courtney Ryley Cooper. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1937. $2.75.

Reviewed by DUNCAN AIKMAN

MR. COOPER manages to keep excited about the national crime situation for 454 pages. Since he writes in the virtuously sarcastic, "no-nonsense-about-me" style of an experienced *Saturday Evening Post* contributor, and sprinkles his opus with frequent revelations of the sex lives and vagaries of our first criminal families, most readers are likely to stay excited with him. There is, as everyone experiences, a sort of magic about these strong, virile fellows with red-hot, normal convictions on the moral problems. If you don't agree with all Mr. Cooper's conclusions, and don't find yourself calling criminals "rats" with gusto after about page 60, you are likely to suffer from shuddery apprehensions that any fine day when you are in Washington, Mr. Cooper and Mr. J. Edgar Hoover might stick their tongues out at you on the street and call you a "crime-coddler." It is, in short, the almost perfect book for making milkmen glad that they are better than pimps—the word is one of Mr. Cooper's Anglo-Saxon favorites—and for making Miss Helen Hokinson's club ladies happy that gun molls are so unattractive.

In a good old-fashioned American way, Mr. Cooper is further excited about crime because of its bigness. An army of 600,000 criminals moves through our jails and prisons every year, as he counts them, and think of all the lucky outlaws, of all the "fences," confederates, and beneficiaries of crime who don't even get arrested. Three out of four of us who live to the age of sixty, we are assured, will live to be victims of crimes "tantamount to robbery, assault, rape, arson, manslaughter, or murder." The mere fiscal turn-over in the crime business, he insists, runs annually far into the billions.

Mr. Cooper's prescription for all these outraging statistics is that we should get rid of our tender-mindedness. The idea of "mental hospitalization" for first offenders he pats on the back in a single sentence. But he argues in practically every chapter for harsher parole rules and prisons on the Alcatraz model.

In court, he counsels, we should dispense "British justice." But judges, he says, should be empowered to announce conclusions based on the prior crimes of defendants which even newspapers are not permitted to mention in England. All criminals, he further insists, should be compelled to accept the service of Public Defense attorneys maintained by the state after a fashion which British justice has not yet, as it happens, dreamed of. Law enforcement should be utterly divorced from politics, and Mr. Cooper promises brightly that if "civic clubs, churches, women's clubs, luncheon organizations, business men, etc.," will only get behind this aspiration and ply their legislative candidates with "pressure politics" on the subject, it will be as easy to put over as prohibition. If you remember when prohibition ever was "over," that is.

On attacking the sources of crime, Mr. Cooper drops a paragraph at the end suggesting that corporations and municipalities should get together on slum clearances and on brightening the lives of the lower income groups generally. But he devotes scores of pages to proposing that if we would only go on a well policed "red light district" system and get rid of the iniquitous institutions of hostess houses and "dine and dance" joints with tourist camp accommodations for illicit honeymooners, much of the atmosphere of sexual debauchery in which crime is bred would be permanently eliminated. Mr. Cooper himself knows of an unnamed community which has just established a model "red light district." There, he says, "madames" and "call girls" are arrested on sight, and pimps are outlawed.

In short, this is one of those books which theorize that we can make our grossly inequalitarian social and economic system work and produce virtue by being more hard-boiled. Now and then Mr. Cooper pushes this philosophy to considerable crescendo—as when he recommends that, in order to prevent sadistic crimes, all perverts on first police court conviction be unsexed—not just sterilized but castrated.

Apart from this constant tying up of the crime problem with punishment and pornography rather than with economics, Mr. Cooper does a gorgeous job of reporting. His outlines of the hook-ups of rackets and fences with the leaders of the gangster kingdom is as thrilling as a first-class mystery novel. His character descriptions of half a dozen "gun molls" are in the best traditions of modern satirical portraiture, and his account of an old-time "madame's" weary disgust with the frills of the new modish vices around her establishment would have been amusing enough for a Hollywood soliloquy in the pre-League of Decency age. Also, if you hanker after knowledge of how men live womenless in prisons and why Dick Loeb of the famous Loeb-Leopold team died of razor wounds in the Illinois Penitentiary, Mr. Cooper supplies all the answers.

The only trouble seems to be that, having posed the problem in its liveliest flesh tones, he prefers to solve it with the rationalizations of his great-aunts.

LOGAN PEARSALL SMITH
From a portrait by Roger Fry.

"Atticism and Happy Grace"

REPERUSALS AND RE-COLLECTIONS. By Logan Pearsall Smith. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1937. $3.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

ALAS, I do not possess Logan Pearsall Smith's omnibus of his "Trivia," but the first of the books that it comprises was a well-marked favorite of mine over twenty years ago. And probably one of the best introductions to Shakespeare is his "On Reading Shakespeare." Now he has brought together, at the age of seventy, a collection of various papers of various dates, from the "Altamura" of 1898 down to the "Fine Writing" of 1936.

Three of these pieces were written as introductions: to a "treasury," to a volume of Donne, and to a volume of Jeremy Taylor. The author calls his "Fine Writing" a "tract." The rest are essays pure and simple, and Pearsall Smith is one of the twentieth century essayists who most deserve our attention.

It seems to me that there are two gems in this collection, and both are about women. Leaving out the most American one, that concerning an ancestress of the author's, Ann Whitall—with its superb and electrifying last paragraph!—and admitting as exceedingly well-taken the author's point, in his "Jane Austen," that the immortal Jane much relies in her plots "upon one contrivance, the False Attachment," the two particular papers I am singling out are "Gertrude Jekyll" and "Michael Field." Miss Jekyll of Munstead Wood, and her gardens, it seems, are famous; but the portrait of this highly individual old lady is little less than masterly, and the description of the author's

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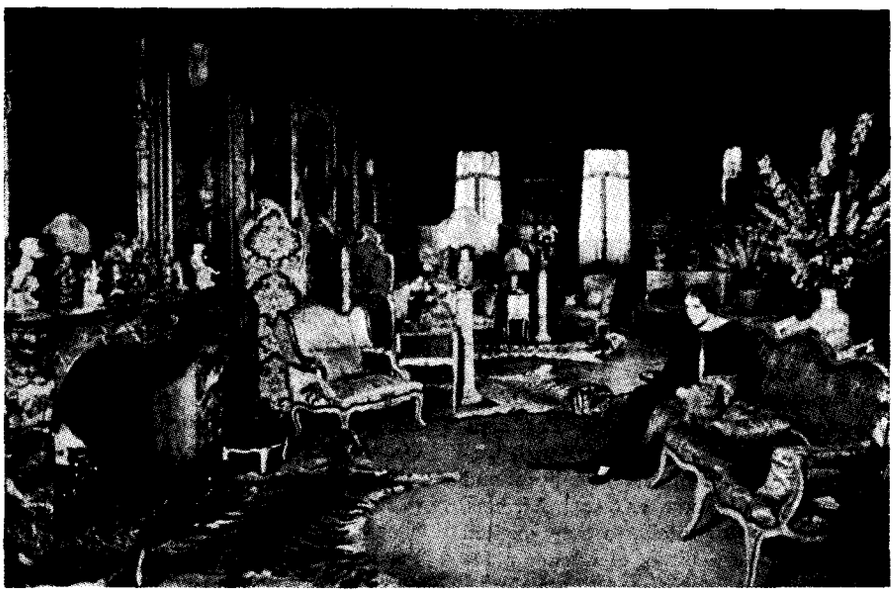
etymological tourneys with her, ending with her revival of the old word "armigerous" is of a most satisfying nature. Michael Field was—of course—two women, an aunt and a niece, Miss Katharine Harris Bradley and Miss Edith Emma Cooper. So much I already knew. But seldom have I encountered a more luscious thumbnail biography of any poet or poets:

> Miss Bradley would begin to speak of the soul of their sacred dog, or of a flower—a white periwinkle, perhaps, which had blossomed in their little, their immense garden—or of a precious adjective; I remember her enthusiasm for the phrase, "eagle-hurried Ganymede," which they had found in an old copy of Poole's "Parnassus" that I had lent them, and which, mosaicked into one of their tragedies, made them happy for a week.

Humorous memories coruscate in this essay. A slight, delightful malice flickers. But the true merit of the poetry receives its meed.

Montaigne and Madame de Sévigné, Sainte-Beuve and Walter Pater, one would have expected as Pearsall Smith enthusiasms, and gracefully well he does by them. The discussion of "English Aphorists," again, was obviously a congenial assignment to one who so relishes pungent phrase and plums of repartee. Literary pilgrimages, particularly the chance one that resurrected the maxims of the unknown Thomas Fuller (not he of "The Worthies"), seem equally natural to our author. The essay on Maginn ends likewise with his maxims. There is a beguiling portrait of the young Proust; and the necessity for the retention in English of the French word "pensées" (to describe such writing as Emerson's) is well argued. But our writer's appreciation of Carlyle as "The Rembrandt of English Prose" (Professor Grierson's phrase), with its "a Jeremiah with castanets" but also with "the rich accumulation in the gloom of his great imagination of darkly gleaming words and images, in the chiaroscuro of which he placed his scenes and portraits"—is, to me, unexpected, though as fine in its way as the "John Donne." The "Jeremy Taylor" I would also elect.

When, with the old-fashioned reader, in Pearsall Smith's defence of "Fine Writing," he asks the extraordinary Mr. Middleton Murry why we should—for a theory—cut ourselves off from such beauty as occurs in the prose of Sir Thomas Browne, I am most heartily with him. So far indeed do I go with him on this tack, and through his balancing the values of prose and poetry, that I am sadly embarrassed when, toward the end, he exclaims, "why, from the point of view of style, that whole Continent [his America] could now sink beneath the sea, and never leave a ripple!" This, surely, is going too far to placate the English, and, moreover, argues the writer less well-informed than I would have him be. The Achilles heel—and a pity!



ELINOR GLYN, 1936. *From "Romantic Adventure."*

Happiness à la Elinor Glyn

ROMANTIC ADVENTURE: the Autobiography of Elinor Glyn. By Elinor Glyn. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1937. $3.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE DANGERFIELD

NOBODY could accuse Elinor Glyn of pessimism. Today, meditating in her drawing room overlooking Hyde Park, and surrounded, as I see by the photograph, by three tiger-skins, two tiger-skin footstools, and an extraordinary diversity of furniture, photographs, bric-a-brac, and wallpaper —she believes that Henry Ford has unlocked the secret of happiness, and that mass production is gradually producing a world in which, while the wealthy retain their possessions, the poor will also become wealthy. But Mrs. Glyn allows herself an occasional doubt. How can the world get along without romance? Mass production notwithstanding, aren't our lives a little poverty-stricken in that particular?

But ah, the romance of other days! In 1892, after a ball in Devonshire, "four responsible Englishmen jumped into the lake at Hillersdon where we were all staying, in their full evening clothes, after quarrelling over me, and then came back to the house and had baths in our host's best champagne." That was the real thing, and it is not surprising that Mr. Clayton Glyn should thereupon swear that he would marry none but the heroine of so exciting a tale. He did so, and on their honeymoon, his ideas being "far ahead of his time," nothing would satisfy him but to engage the public swimming baths at Brighton for their private use, where "he made me loose my hair and let it stream in the water and had no use for bathing dresses."

After this, the reader might expect further revelations of an even more intimate nature. Surely the red-headed Mrs. Glyn, whose green eyes were so admired by the Crown Prince Constantine, Prince Hussein of Egypt, and a host of other titled gentlemen, and whose works were ranked for a time by the British public as equalling in audacity those of Paul de Kock and Aristotle—surely such a lady, with her romantic ideas, would have yielded at length to the inevitable temptation. Mr. Glyn would not have raised objections, we are told. But Mrs. Glyn's attitude towards extra-marital love was a simple one. There was the Supreme God above, Who looked upon human frailties with an all-pitying eye: and below Him there was Karma, which demanded expiation for one's misdeeds. Unwilling to offend against the Karmic Laws, Mrs. Glyn took refuge in the composition of novels. "If only I had listened to the entreaties of the enthusiastic attaché!" But she could not; she never could: and the result was "Three Weeks." I have not read that novel, but Mark Twain admired it, and an elderly Scots professor of Religious History, bursting into tears as he finished the last chapter, sobbed "Lassie, posterity will justify you." So it must have had something.

It is curious that one should not respond to these reminiscences as one has to those of other ladies who have celebrated in prose the glories of the costly life. With them one experiences a simple desire to rob them of their jewelry and send the proceeds to Spain. But I am glad to think that Mrs. Glyn is left in possession of her bibelots and her tiger-skins. I am not sure why but I rather think it is because, beneath her talk of romance and the Brighton baths and all that, one discerns the qualities of courage, loyalty, and generosity. They are fairly well concealed; but then, when it comes to writing autobiography, Mrs. Glyn is her own worst enemy.

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Paine on a Pedestal

TOM PAINE, FRIEND OF MANKIND. By Hesketh Pearson. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1937. $3.

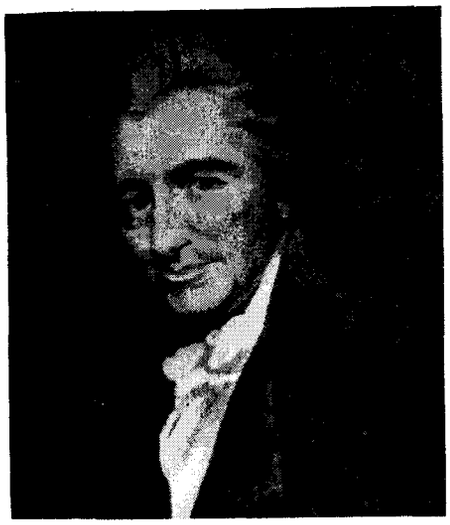
Reviewed by CRANE BRINTON

THERE was need for a good biography of Thomas Paine, and Mr. Pearson's book goes some way towards filling it. Moncure Conway's life of Paine, though based on a good deal of research, is a study in secular hagiography; his Paine is too good for this or any other world; Mr. Pearson's is merely too good for this world. We need a solid, large-scale biography, exploring through documents and monographs such controversial parts of Paine's career as the Beaumarchais-Deane affair, his "persecution" by Gouverneur Morris, his relations with English and French radicals, his means of livelihood. The writer of such a book ought to know something about the sociology of revolutions; but a knowledge of human beings and of historical method would do. Until such a book comes along, Mr. Pearson's will be by all odds the best available. It is lively, clear, and readable. It puts Paine on a pedestal, but it makes no attempt to hide the other-worldly foundations of the pedestal. Mr. Pearson allows Paine to speak at length for himself, always a generous and sometimes a dangerous thing for a biographer to do. The long letter to Kitty Few, for instance, though it seems to him a touching proof of the depth and sincerity of Paine's feelings, will seem to others a proof of Paine's awkwardness, of his immersion in rhetoric, of his inability to get down to the petty, concrete facts of living. "A thousand years hence, perhaps in less, America may be what England now is! The innocence of her character that won the hearts of all nations in her favor may sound like a romance, and her inimitable virtue as if it had never been."

Mr. Pearson is quite clear about some of his hero's weaknesses. "Convinced of his rectitude, Paine could not brook contradiction, and though he put the highest value on reason, he became unreasonable when anyone reasoned with him." Yet he is almost as blind to the other side in Paine's constant quarrels as Conway was. Paine's marital difficulties, though their source is obscure, probably arose from something besides his highmindedness. The Deane affair is unlikely ever to be wholly cleared up, but it seems now that Deane was at worst duped by Beaumarchais; and Paine's use against Deane of information of the kind employees of the State Department do not customarily give out to newspapers, shows his honesty superior not only to profit, but to honor and common sense. Gouverneur Morris, American Minister at Paris during Paine's French revolutionary career, certainly disliked him, but there is no adequate evidence that he conspired with Robespierre to have him guillotined. Surely anyone whom Robespierre really wanted guillotined in the spring of 1794 was speedily guillotined? Paine survived the Terror because no one in France hated him enough, or thought him important enough, to bring him before the Revolutionary Tribunal. Morris wrote Jefferson that the best thing to be done for Paine was to let him lie inconspicuously in prison. This was such obvious good sense that there really is no excuse for the unanimity with which Paine's biographers have taken Paine's own word for this "persecution" by Morris. Paine, to whom Mr. Pearson elsewhere attributes a fondness for self-dramatization, did not fail to take advantage of his share in the great melodrama of the French Revolution to indulge himself in that fondness.

HESKETH PEARSON

One reason why Mr. Pearson's book is not a better one is clear from his preface, in which he says that he has "written of Paine primarily as a man, not as the founder of a faith or the formulator of a political philosophy." Needless to say, he does not keep the promise, but gives full and very able analyses of "Common Sense," "The Crisis," "The Rights of Man," and "The Age of Reason." For Paine was not a man in the sense that Mr. Pickwick, or Babbitt, or even Colonel Sellers were men, but a radical journalist; and you cannot write intelligently about radical journalists without considering the nature of radicalism, of journalism, and a good deal else that falls within the province of the history of ideas. One suspects that in the back of Mr. Pearson's mind lay a point well worth making: you must not write about political ideas in a vacuum, as if one abstraction begot other abstractions, world without end. The rights of man were mixed up with the interests and sentiments of Thomas Paine. Mr. Pearson, however, has really said that since others have put the cart before the horse, he will pretend that there isn't any cart at all. He would have done better to discard his dualism entirely, and try to give us the whole Paine, interests, sentiments, and ideas, all bound up in an extraordinarily interesting human being.



TOM PAINE (*portrait by Romney*).

Mr. Pearson thinks better of Paine than most Americans do in this two-hundredth anniversary of his birth. The history of Paine's reputation is in itself worth a book. The author of "Common Sense" and "The Crisis," if he did not single-handed create the United States, at any rate deserves to be ranked as one of the fathers of his country. To argue whether circumstances made "Common Sense" effective in 1776, or whether "Common Sense" served to tie circumstances into a particular pattern, is to get unprofitably caught in the cart-and-horse dilemma. "Common Sense" is a part of a given historical situation, the consequences of which still affect us all. Its author was a more important person than our folk-traditions or our schoolbooks make him. Certainly Paine is not for most Americans a peer of Washington, Franklin, and Jefferson. No Weems, no McGuffey, has enshrined him in our hearts. No doubt the scandal of "The Age of Reason" is here a simple and adequate explanation. Yet it is possible to go deeper. Paine's old age in New York saw him an outcast, a seedy, argumentative old man, the town "atheist." He was always a revolutionist. Now revolutionists, to be permanent heroes, must die young in glorious failure, or live ripely on the success of their revolution—that is, turn conservative. Sidney or Washington: there is little other choice. Poets may be permitted an eternity of revolt, but Paine was no poet. At seventy he was repeating in New York taverns the grand phrases he had turned off so nobly thirty years before in Philadelphia. But the audience had changed, and the phrases did not sound so well. The poor man still meant them. Jefferson, too, was still repeating them; but his actions had shown for a long time that he did not mean them.

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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The Specialist

ORGANIZATIONS which devote themselves to the extra-legal protection of public morals by means of censorship and terrorism are usually not heavily endowed. They have invested funds as the result of bequests from people who believe in their disgusting activity, but these are dishearteningly small and the societies are forced to depend for their existence on contributions. The people who make contributions are worthy but incline to be negligent; it is easy to forget one's duty to the uplift unless frequently reminded of it. So our censors remind their supporters by making spectacular drives on pumped-up waves of pornography and on conspicuous books against which a momentarily plausible allegation of obscenity can be made. The more spectacular the better, and the more conspicuous the better. The publicity thus produced reaches the contributors and notifies them that their organization is on the job. It is by no means necessary to win the case; success in such a prosecution is so much velvet, the real desideratum being the publicity, which brings in contributions. Whenever you read that an anti-vice society is taking action against some book, play, or picture you may be pretty sure that its managers are worried about the budget. This is the economic determination of public purity.

Twenty-four years of altruistic devotion to dirty postcards and the kind of books boys of thirteen read in back alleys have trained Mr. John S. Sumner to detect pornography where decent people cannot find it. As a specialist in pornography he has all the authority that a lifelong habituation to it can give him: such an authority as can be achieved only by spending hundreds of sleepless nights judicially studying photographs produced for the tourist trade, turning them over and over till dawn comes, repeatedly consulting trained responses to determine which fall short and which get over the line. The routine material of the Society for the Suppression of Vice, whose secretary Mr. Sumner is, is the back alley and rear room trade, but one judges that this does not produce a satisfactory income, for every so often the Society takes up literature in a big way. It always gets slapped down: you can step into any bookstore and buy "The 'Genius,'" "Jurgen," "God's Little Acre," and many other books it has conspicuously proceeded against. But it keeps coming back so often as to suggest that mere purity may not be its principal objective. Let us remember the chance of contributions when we consider the prosecution newly brought against one of the best American novels of 1936.

You and I and all normal people fail to detect pornography in Mr. James Farrell's "A World I Never Made." By a striking coincidence the Book-of-the-Month Club has just awarded the author of that novel a prize of twenty-five hundred dollars five days before Mr. Sumner's contemptible proceedings are due to bring him into court. What blinds our guilty eyes is Mr. Farrell's intellectual integrity, his high artistic achievement, his book's memorable representation of human pain and human tragedy. But Mr. Sumner has trained himself to disregard such things in his professional pursuit of other values. His guess is that he can make out a plausible case against the book. He will feel good if he does; and, of course, even if he doesn't, his efforts will produce a lot of publicity.

One more skirmish in the endless battle for the right of the public to read literature and of authors to write it. The battle must go on so long as there is bigotry in the world, so long as there are minds which have to disguise their abnormal pleasure in eroticism as a—detailed—horror of eroticism, and so long as money can be raised by alleging pornography in places where it does not exist. The fact that it is getting easy to defeat the Society for the Suppression of Vice must not make us lax. It's time to turn out the guard again. Men of good will, decent people, normal people, people who believe that literature must be defended against diseased minds, people who believe in liberty, people who believe that bigoted minorities must be prevented from working their purposes on society, people who have the probity of the law and of American culture at heart, must take up the fight again and see it through.

Fortunately Mr. Sumner has made our job easier by attacking a book whose validity as a work of art cannot be impugned. Mr. Sumner has to prove that "A World I Never Made" is lewd and pornographic, whereas it is neither under any construction that anyone, even a psychopath, can put on those terms. He has to prove that it tends to corrupt a normal person, whereas it could not possibly corrupt even Mr. Sumner. It is, of course, frequently unpleasant and sometimes revolting, but those qualities have nothing to do with Mr. Sumner's allegations. It is a bitter book, a violent book, but neither bitterness nor violence comes under the statute. It is an austere book with great nobility of thought and feeling, a book of dignity and exalted moral purpose, but our laws are not so favorable to disease that Mr. Sumner can penalize austerity, nobility, dignity, and morality. The likelihood is that, no matter how insulting to Mr. Farrell and the public the present prosecution is, it will end in another decision that will make success even more difficult for Mr. Sumner in the future. The hearing in a magistrate's court will occur while this issue of *The Saturday Review* is on the press. The editor expects that the complaint will be dismissed there and is confident that, if it isn't, Mr. Farrell and his publishers will win on trial, adding one more precedent to the legal distinction between pornography and the presence of obscene expressions.

But Mr. Sumner and his Society, always a bore, are getting to be an intolerable nuisance. And this fighting a defensive battle is getting to be a bore too, and has always been a mistake in tactics. Surely it is time for decent people to begin a counter-attack. There must be ways of carrying the war into the enemy's terrain, ways of making common decency militant. The editor does not know what they are but volunteers to serve on any committee that will find out what they are and will put them into effect. Certain literary lawyers have valuably served our cause: let them be conscripted to determine the most effective legal procedures. Writers, publishers, booksellers, libraries, and the general public should all be represented on a permanent board which should harass the Society for the Suppression of Vice and all similar organizations. It should attack them with every permissible legal device, with every form of publicity that will convey ridicule and contempt, and with every other weapon that can be made effective against such enemies of decency, literature, and democratic institutions.

The law of injunctions is attractively flexible: can we not enjoin the Society's activity? Is there not reason to believe that a private enterprise which interferes with the rights and liberties of citizens can be prosecuted as a public nuisance? These are important questions, and they should be explored in the public interest. We know that the censorship exercised by threat and terrorism over booksellers is extra-legal, and actual tests have proved that the law will not sanction the prosecution of literary masterpieces. All right, let's see what resources the law has for offensive warfare. It must have some, and if we use them persistently we may get somewhere. . . . And meanwhile it is always possible to alter the kind of publicity that smut-hounds receive in such a way as to reduce their desire for publicity.

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Letters to the Editor: *Mr. Louis N. Feipel on Webster's International*

The following letter is of particular interest, since it comes from the man whom Bernard Shaw has called "the prince of proof-readers." Mr. Feipel's proof-reading is all unofficial. He has written hundreds of letters to well known authors listing typographical errors and editorial lapses in their books, often catching from two to four hundred mistakes in a single volume. The New Yorker *had an interesting story about Mr. Feipel in its issue of August 23, 1930; to this we are indebted for the foregoing information, and for the statement that "Mr. Feipel has received . . . more than three hundred replies—from Arnold Bennett, Galsworthy, Shaw, D. H. Lawrence, Cabell, Norman Douglas . . . every writing person you can think of."*

Noah's Ark

SIR:—Dr. Lucius H. Holt congratulates himself that no serious errors have occurred in getting out the Second Edition of Webster's New International Dictionary. (See *S.R.L.*, Jan. 2, 1937, pp. 15-16.)

Besides the two to which he calls attention (s.v. Easter and Arkwright), he and all users of the Dictionary might be interested in the following:

p. 1063, col. 1, s.v. glass toweling:
—CLASS CLOTH, 1. *should be*—GLASS CLOTH, 1.

p. 663, col. 2, s.v. Dahlia: 1 a . . . *pompom*, a small form of *show;*
p. 1917, col. 1, s.v. pompon: 2 c A race of dahlias with small flowers. See Dahlia 1 a.
pompon *should be* pompom (*or vice versa*).

p. 2559, col. 1, s.v. syndicator: Definition reads, "One who syndicates; a syndicaterer."
There is no "syndicaterer" listed in the vocabulary-place. There is a noun, "syndicateer" (one who controls, esp. financially, a syndicate).

p. 1878, col. 2, s.v. plaguy (adv.): Definition states, "Plaguily (see FLAT, adj., 1). *Colloq.*"
Referring to "flat, adj., 1," we read: "Having an even and horizontal surface, or nearly so, without marked prominences or depressions; level and smooth." What is the connection between "plaguy" and "flat"?

p. 692, col. 2, s.v. delicatessen (n.pl.): . . . also, a store where such foods are sold.
This should read, "also (*sing.*), a store where such foods are sold."

p. 2283, col. 1, s.v. septuplet, def. 1: One of seven children born at a birth. How about animals? Would it not read better, "One of seven offspring (mammals) born at a birth"?

p. 524, col. 3, s.v. collar of SS.:
The definition ought to be emended so as to include the present-day use of this kind of collar by the Lord Chief Justice of England and the Lord Mayor of London.

p. 1782, col. 2, vocabulary-word "Parthenope":
Par-then'ope *should be* Par-then'o-pe [cf. Pe-nel'o-pe, p. 1809]

p. 1914, col. 2, s.v. polyphloesboean:
polyphloisboism, polyphloisboioism, *n. Rant.* [The "*Rant*," which is the definition of the word, should be in roman, instead of in italic.]

p. 330, col. 2, s.v. breakfast:
breakfast tabl *should be* breakfast table.

p. 2248, col. 1, s.v. screw:
thumbscre *should be* thumbscrew.

p. 1071, col. 1, s.v. go for: Definitions "b" and "c" read as follows:
"b *Colloq.* To attack;. c To aim at; to try to secure."
The semicolon after "attack" should be omitted.

The above findings do not include various instances of words which appeared in the First Edition but strangely enough are omitted from the Second Edition; nor do they touch upon inconsistencies and other vagaries in the actual contents of the Second Edition. These I am reserving for future use.

LOUIS N. FEIPEL.
Director of Publications of the Brooklyn Public Library.
Brooklyn, N. Y.

"WASN'T IT CUTE OF HER TO READ IT ALL THE WAY THROUGH BEFORE EXCHANGING IT FOR A SHIRLEY TEMPLE DOLL?"

Proletarianitis

SIR:—It is more than refreshing to find in the *SRL* of January 9th Mr. Calverton's perspicacious article on "Proletarianitis." Long overdue is such a criticism of a type of writing, inherently dishonest, as Mr. Calverton avers, to which American writers of a certain kidney have thought it profitable to divert their talents. "Proletarian literature," says Mr. Calverton, "is literature which is dominated by a dynamic revolutionary idea and inspired by a collective purpose" . . . embodying "a belief in the working class as the dominant class of the future." But why call this "literature"? Is it anything more than propaganda—and dishonest propaganda at that, since it presents, as Mr. Calverton states, an untrue picture, inspired by an alien "ideology" (in its own phrase) and produced after an alien model? Says Mr. Calverton: "Until we reach a stage of development wherein the American workers become proletarian-conscious, we shall not be able to develop a proletarian literature of any scope or power." Well, why should we? "The best we can do," he wisely adds, "is to write truthfully about the American scene as it is, without subscribing to any superimposed political line in our interpretation which tends to distort our vision of reality." True. And quite enough, one should say, in behalf of either literature or the "proletariat!"

KATHERINE WILSON.
Berkeley, Cal.

(Readers of The Saturday Review *will recall that Katherine Wilson's letter on keeping politics out of book reviews, printed March 28, 1936, started a long and still unsettled controversy among our correspondents.—Ed.)*

Mash Note

SIR:—I wish to call your attention to an error that appeared in my review on page 16 of *The Saturday Review* for the 23rd. I hope it was typographical. I quote: "The name is very descriptive for the terrain is essentially mile after mile of *mash* and savannah." If this is the case I intend to head for the Bahr-el-Ghazal immediately. I must admit a liking for old Kentucky corn licker made from mash and if mile after mile of said substance exists in equatorial Africa, I do not intend to miss a bit of it. I am writing the Royal Geographical Society about this discovery as this product seems to be omitted from their series of economic geographical maps.

JULIAN W. FEISS.
Cleveland, Ohio.

(In the original review, read "marsh" for "mash."—Ed.)

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Both Your Houses

WE OR THEY. By Hamilton Fish Armstrong. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1936. $1.50.

HITLER OVER RUSSIA. By Ernst Henri. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by VERA MICHELES DEAN

IN a slim but stimulating book the editor of *Foreign Affairs* undertakes to answer some of the crucial questions raised by the uneasy cohabitation in Europe of democracies and dictatorships. In the struggle waged by the two doctrines for domination of the Continent—and of the world—which will survive? We or they? Democracy or dictatorship? How are democracies to deal with aggressive dictatorships? Should they beat an orderly retreat, hoping to save their own possessions by giving the dictators a free hand to seize those of weaker neighbors? Or should they form a united front against dictatorships on the march, ready to defend the cause of freedom wherever it is menaced, by force if necessary?

Kaiden-Keystone
HAMILTON FISH ARMSTRONG

In answering these questions Mr. Armstrong, like most writers on the subject, is hampered by the incontrovertible fact that "nobody who cares about the future of democracy wants war," and that liberalism would probably be unable to survive "the wartime curbs that would be prerequisite to victory." He consequently opposes a "preventive war," as well as a crusade of democracies to aid either fascism or communism, which he regards as equally "obnoxious." The democracies, he declares, should collaborate with dictatorships "on routine matters in a fair spirit, keep every engagement entered into with them to the letter, and show calmness and official reserve in the face of provocative gestures only." They should strengthen themselves from within by social and economic reforms, and neglect no opportunity abroad "of mitigating the economic and financial diseases which have persuaded great and proud peoples to accept as normal the mental and moral status of serfdom."

Mr. Armstrong's temperate program assumes that dictatorships, which constantly hold up European peace at the point of a gun, are prepared to act in a fair spirit, to keep their engagements—after repeatedly trampling treaties under foot—and to content themselves with bellicose gestures stopping short of bellicose acts (an assumption squarely contradicted by Japan in Manchuria and Italy in Ethiopia). Mr. Armstrong himself points out that "we should be under no illusions that a live-and-let-live relationship between democracies and dictatorships can last indefinitely."

If that is the case, what should the democracies do when the break comes? When an act of aggression has been committed? Mr. Armstrong sees only two possible courses: "to accept aggression with a pretense of good grace; or to oppose it by preconcerted action between all nations which feel menaced by the growing tendency to recognize the *fait accompli* as a substitute for treaty observance and orderly negotiation." At this point one expects the author to attack the Gordian knot formed by the reluctance of democracies to face another war and their almost equally strong reluctance to let the dictatorships trample the freedom of other peoples under foot. But beyond stating that the democracies, including the United States, should collaborate with one another and "particularize responsibilities, remove ambiguities, and dissolve illusions" regarding their concerted action, Mr. Armstrong does not come to grips with the issue of war and peace.

Yet he subsequently points out that even the United States, in spite of its desire for neutrality, cannot escape the struggle between democracy and dictatorship "because the aggressive forces have acquired momentum which their leaders could not control even if they would, and because the battlefront is worldwide." Again and again Mr. Armstrong nears the point of saying that the only effective weapon against aggressive dictatorships is the threat of force, only to take refuge in the hope that the dictators may pass from the scene before a showdown becomes necessary. Only at the close of his analysis—which would have been sharpened by the omission of familiar historical material—does he reach the conclusion that between dictatorship and democracy there is no compromise. "Our fathers won their liberties by force, in three centuries of struggle. Programs of action to take those liberties away by force give notice that we must be ready at some point to reply in kind." At the risk of being accused of nagging, the reader may ask when that point will be reached, and whether meanwhile the procrastination, concessions, and vacillations of democracies do not merely strengthen the dictatorships in their belief that democracies will tolerate the most dangerous assaults on peace rather than accept the challenge of war.

That this challenge is on the point of being delivered by the Hitler dictatorship, which has already formulated elaborate plans for an attack on the Soviet Union, is the thesis of Ernst Henri, already known for his sensational volume "Hitler over Europe?" In this no less sensational sequel the author, whose sympathies are openly on the side of communism against fascism, claims to reveal the intricate network of leagues, combinations, and personal relationships that Nazi Germany has allegedly established with all countries in Eastern and Southeastern Europe which have either already succumbed to fascism or threaten to do so in the near future. Like most writers who base their analysis of international affairs solely on dialectical materialism, Henri excludes or minimizes the endless contradictions and shifts in foreign and domestic politics which might force modification of his ironclad thesis. It is no news even to mere headline readers that the Nazis (following in the footsteps of their wartime predecessors who, without ever hearing of fascism, had occupied the Ukraine in 1918), are eager to obtain land and raw materials in the Soviet Union; or that Nazi diplomacy has sought to build up an anti-communist front stretching from Spain to Japan. But by adopting the mysterious airs of a master-detective and secret-dispatch-reader, Henri does little to clarify an intricate international situation of which the fascist-communist conflict is but one aspect.

Vera Micheles Dean is on the staff of the Foreign Policy Association.

Neither Satire Nor Propaganda

THE PERSIAN JOURNEY OF THE REVEREND ASHLEY WISHARD AND HIS SERVANT FATHI. By Elgin Groseclose. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by PEARL S. BUCK

WHEN I read this book I was puzzled by it. I read it twice. The first time I enjoyed it very much, feeling, until I came to the very end, that it was a piece of rather pleasant satire on the whole business of Christian propaganda in foreign countries. The author, I thought, showed nicely his theme that our mechanistic religion is not so truly religious as the faith which the people had whom he went to save. When I came to the end, however, I doubted that the book was a satire, and so I read it again. The second time I felt it might be part of that literature which the Protestant churches furnish to their constituency in order to educate them to the support of foreign missions.

But upon investigation I found that the book was neither satire nor Protestant literature. Mr. Groseclose is a young engineer whose work in Persia gave him unusual opportunities to see something of Persian life and something of mission-

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ELGIN GROSECLOSE

ary life. Out of his impressions of both and out of his personal convictions he has composed what must be called, for lack of a better term, a novel. It is a novel with a simple theme, namely, that the object of foreign missions ought not to be social but evangelical, that the elaborate mechanistic and material benefits of the modern forms of Christianity are of no avail in a primitive environment. Only the simple old-time Gospel carried afoot by a converted soul, can go into inaccessible places.

The hero, Reverend Ashley Wishard, is sent from a sophisticated American church to Persia. He has ample funds, much good will, some medical knowledge, and a real devotion to his cause. His backers give him a fine plant in which to work. But he finds the people are not where his buildings are. The ones he wants to save live out in the country. They will not come to him, and so he goes to them. Oriental laissez-faire, combined with bad roads and no gas stations, ruin his car. Oriental diseases are beyond his medical skill. He is at last captured by a group of Kurd bandits. He lives among them, learns to see them as human beings, and when at last he is released, he decides to go back to live among them, single-handed, with no Western or modern material aids, convinced that the only thing of value he has to give them is primitive Christian faith. His great asset throughout has been his servant Fathi, a man of a pleasant wit, who becomes converted.

The story is too weighted to have great value as a novel. The missionary never becomes quite human enough to live. Fathi converted is never as witty as he was while he was heathen. The book is an earnest intellectual performance, rather than a realistic story of actual life. It is obvious that the author had a purpose, and he has bent his characters to it, rather than worked through them to the same end.

Nevertheless there will be people who will enjoy this book for its pleasant touches of description and of humor.

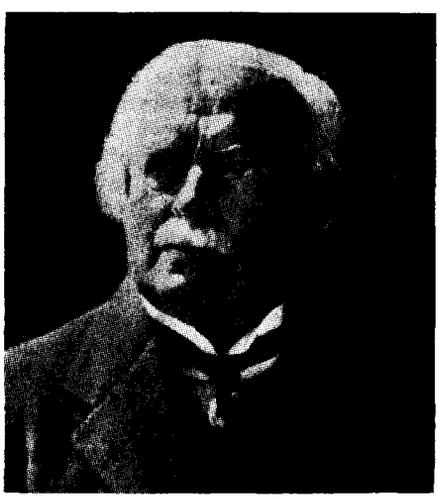
Lloyd George Concludes

WAR MEMORIES OF DAVID LLOYD GEORGE. Vol. VI, 1918. Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1937. $3.

Reviewed by SIDNEY B. FAY

"WITH this volume I finish my recollections of the War. They have taken the best part of my time for five years," writes Lloyd George in the preface to his sixth and final volume of interesting memoirs. "When a man starts a new craft in his seventieth year he does not expect to gain that proficiency in the art which would enable him to become anything better than an amateur. . . . It is as such that I crave to be judged." Well, many a professional historian will envy the venerable and versatile Welshman the skill and success with which he has achieved his task, and will commend his wisdom in not plunging into the morass of the Peace Conference.

This sixth volume opens with the Allied efforts to withstand the onslaught of Ludendorff's hosts in his last desperate drive toward Paris. It closes the story with the exciting days preceding the Armistice and the abdication of the Kaiser. A good chapter surveys the chaos in Russia and the Allied attempts to aid Kerensky and the counter-revolutionary forces. As Lloyd George points out, however, it was soon clear that the purposes of the Allies and Kerensky were not identical. The concern of the Allies was to prevent the vast and productive area of the Russian Empire from becoming subject to the Central Powers and a source of supply for them in the war, and not to decide whether the Russians preferred to be ruled by Lenin or Kerensky. Kerensky, on the other hand, was chiefly concerned to get the Allies to regard him and his friends as the legitimate government of Russia.



DAVID LLOYD GEORGE

In the chapters on the collapse of Turkey, Bulgaria, and Austria, followed by Ludendorff's sudden panic and disappearance, Lloyd George has less to say that is new and authoritative than when he is dealing with events in England or the Allied Headquarters in France. He depends more on the familiar German and other available accounts, and quotes liberally from the well-known official documents.

In the midst of his narrative of the war, it is pleasant to find a fine tribute to Sir H. A. L. Fisher, with portrait, and an account of what he did to improve British education during the critical months of 1918. The school age for children was effectively extended to the age of fourteen, and provision was made under certain conditions for further education up to the age of eighteen. Even more important was the better training given to teachers, the increase of their pay, and the provisions of better security for their old age, so that teachers getting $2,000 who had taught for forty years could retire after sixty with a pension of $1,000 and a lump sum of $2,650 in addition.

As in the previous volumes the conflict between the civilian and the military authorities frequently led Lloyd George to sharp words, so in this final volume he exposes the intrigue of Sir Frederick Maurice to overthrow the Cabinet at the extremely dangerous moment of Ludendorff's great offensive. And in a closing chapter he reiterates some of his criticisms of Haig and takes issue with Duff Cooper and the recently published Haig "Diaries."

Looking back at the great struggle, Lloyd George asks and answers three questions: Could the war have been averted? Yes. Could it have been brought to an earlier termination by negotiation? No. Could victory have been achieved at an earlier date by better handling on either side of the resources at their disposal? Yes. With his conclusions and reasons the reviewer is in substantial agreement. As a final reflection Llyod George adds:

> If Germany had been led by Bismarck and Moltke instead of by successors who were inferior in statesmanship and war, the event of the great struggle between democracy and a military autocracy would in all human probability have been different. The blunders of Germany saved us from the consequences of our own. But let all who trust Justice to the arbitrament of war bear in mind that the issue may depend not on the righteousness of the quarrel, but on the craft of the litigants. It is the teaching of history, and this war enforces the lesson.

Sidney B. Fay, professor of history at Harvard, is the author of "Origins of the World War."

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The Bowling Green by Christopher Morley

Reunion in Verona

EVERY lover of Shakespeare, in some morbid moment, has wondered what might have been the career of two such fiery particles as Romeo and Juliet had they lived to bear the fardels of matrimony. George Jean Nathan, in a delightful patchwork quilt called *The Avon Flows*,* offers a suggestion. He describes it as "an editorial variation." He has "orchestrated" three of Shakespeare's plays (with a pair of scissors) and by cutting, stitching together, transposing a few scenes and adding a few stage-directions, he prolongs our two star-crossed lovers into "a comedy of modern marriage." The pious reader may be entertained, or he may be shocked. I speak with reluctance on the result as it stands in libretto. No one can tell much of the efficiency of any stage-script until he sees it in play before an actual audience. I should admire to see this piece in production, though I admit that its difficulties are serious.

Notably weak in verbal memory, I myself am inclined to think that if one might count on an audience not too textually adept this compote of Shakespeare would prove good theatre. Or would it show better to a knowing house who would recognize and nudge each other at the shuttled passages? You see, Mr. Nathan has taken (speaking largely) *Romeo and Juliet* for his first act, *Othello* for his second, *The Taming of the Shrew* for his third; giving the fat parts throughout to Romeo, Juliet, and Tybalt. To suggest a fair notion of what he has done, let's imagine that the MSS of those three plays have been found in a trunk, all mixed together in loose scenes; and we must further suppose (this not difficult) that the dramatist's handwriting is so villainous that we cannot exactly decide to which characters some speeches are allotted. Mr. Nathan, the ecstatic discoverer of these papers, chooses Romeo and Juliet as the most attractive couple available. He takes the halcyon episode of their young love and sudden secret marriage. Then, among his mass of scripts he finds the livid scenes of tragic complication: a devoted husband's jealousy vilely and falsely aroused. This situation (Othello and Iago) he attributes to Romeo and Tybalt, and lines we know as Desdemona's he gives to Juliet. But before the deed of horror is accomplished, in the confusion of his scripts he finds himself in a merry sardonic panorama of a spirited girl disciplined by an astute husband. He assumes, not unreasonably, that Juliet, outraged by Romeo-Othello's suspicions, had returned to live with her parents. So for his third act he gives Juliet the role of Katharine, and she is wooed and baited back to wedlock by the tactics of Romeo-Petruchio.

In short, after the romantic opening—a charming condensation of the first two acts of *Romeo and Juliet*—the following "re-identifications" are required. Romeo = Othello = Petruchio. Juliet = Desdemona = Katharine. Tybalt = Iago; Paris = Cassio. For Act Two, Roderigo and Emilia are brought in from *Othello;* and in Act Three, Baptista's "sides" are handed to old Capulet. In the matter of the text itself, Mr. Nathan has been scrupulous: I mean, the lines are all Shakespeare, there is no synthetic writing-in. The serious minded devotee will think this tantamount to saying that having committed the crime, he at least gives the body respectful embalming.

But I can't leave it quite there, because (if you like to ponder about your Shakespeare) Mr. Nathan's compilation might raise some interesting questions. How sharply, for instance, are Shakespeare's characterizations drawn? Is it not so that many of his royal passages might be put in almost anywhere? How often, coming unawares upon some of the diamond bits in *Measure for Measure* would we not swear them to be from *Hamlet?* Is it then too grotesque to imagine the horrific outcries of Othello coming from an older Romeo? After the first banana-skin the prattfalls bother me surprisingly little. I have (honestly, now) interest in few of Shakespeare's characters as identities. I relish them for what they say, which we usually attribute to that mysterious high voltage we call "Shakespeare" moving through the whole many-lamped circuit.

Underwood & Underwood
GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

(What George Frisbee will make of all this I am frightful to foresee.)

I admit at once that it is a considerable twinge to find our best-loved lovers moving ("some years later") into the gross horror of the Othello plot. It is grievous to find hotblood Tybalt falling to Iago's level; become Romeo's hypocrite friend for the sake of a reptile's revenge. Yet it is not too far beyond credibility—though in one instance (Act Two, Scene 4) the new dialogue grafted upon Romeo and Tybalt offers some prickles of doubt. That Romeo should say that Paris knew all about Romeo's wooing of Juliet seems less than ingenuous. But Mr. Nathan's stage directions for Juliet in that scene—first she speaks "aciduously" and then "even more aciduously"—sadly warn us that our lovers have suffered the common chemistry of life.

It is in Act Two, Scene 6, that Mr. Nathan faces the stiffest hurdle of his course. Here, I think, he takes his only liberty: allowing Romeo-Othello to eavesdrop the pathetic scene in which Juliet-Desdemona protests her innocence to Emilia and Tybalt-Iago. Hearing this, Romeo realizes that he has been played upon by Tybalt; he emerges with what our editor calls "a sardonic self-satisfied chuckle," and the upshot (here indeed we fall like Lucifer) is that Romeo "gives Tybalt a powerful, flooring boot in the rear." This indeed (as Conan Doyle might have said) is how the Brigadier came to Minsky; if you can make offing from this perilous lee you will be in full fettle for the shrew-taming comedy of the last act. The lines that follow this vis a tergo are, accidentally, as funny as anything can well be; but here also is where the sensitive Shakespeareans will be calling for their carriages. In sum, is the tragic matter of Othello so deeply planted and fixed in the spectator's mind that he is disqualified to transfer it to other speakers and another mood? One of Othello's grim scenes with Desdemona is here required to be played as by Romeo and Juliet, with overtones of mutual mockery. It is probably a deplorable confession: I rather enjoy it so. (Othello taken straight is pretty grievous going.) But I repeat, only actual playing could prove the show.

It is probably impossible to make report of Mr. Nathan's mischievous experiment without confusing the reader. To some it will seem a peculiarly horrid form of cynicism to put into the mouths of the world's best-loved children the sultry disgusts of *Othello.* The second act, where Mr. Nathan battens on the Moor, is the danger. Alack, you will cry with Juliet herself, to practise stratagems upon so soft a subject. But if you enjoy your Shakespearean text as vaguely and abstractly as most of us, and if you (secretly) somewhat disrespect him as playwright and worship him as phrasemonger, this outrage is enjoyable. It is worth reading, even if only as ordeal; it is certainly worth playing as an experi-

* *THE AVON FLOWS. A Play by William Shakespeare and George Jean Nathan. Random House.* 1937. $2.

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ment. If you had just the right kind of audience, how they would enjoy it—which is, as Nathan der Weise well knows, the most hopeless praise for a play.

Inscription

W. A. D. writes to ask if any reader of the Green can identify the origin of an inscription said to be carved over the mantel of some English inn, thus:—

Pray stand aside, 'tis every man's desire
Beside thine own, to see and feel the fire.

It has been used over the fireplace in the tap-room of the Union Club in New York, and many members have appealed for its history. Can anyone help?

Letters of Fanny Brawne

It is of the greatest interest to learn that the long-awaited Letters of Fanny Brawne (to Fanny Keats, sister of the poet) give a quite different picture of her from that hastily formed by many readers in the past. I have not yet seen the book, soon to be published here by the Oxford Press, but quote the beginning of a review in the London *Times*:—

> A packet of letters written by one girl to another have, after a century of journeying up and down the world, come home again to refute a legend and reverse a verdict of injustice. They form a document of high importance in the biography of John Keats.
>
> Those readers who were never among the condemners of Fanny Brawne have particular reason for pleasure in finding their conviction fully supported by the direct evidence. Fanny Brawne has emerged from obscurity to exculpate herself and Keats in simple, homely, affectionate phrases. She speaks as one who took the measure of the poet's worth as a lover and responded with a whole heart. None of his closest friends were more keenly aware than she that Keats was a man "formed for every good thing, and, I think I dare say it, for every thing great." These words are hers and they are conclusive. The final impression the correspondence leaves is of a woman of keen perception, proud in being the object of a great man's devotion, and studious to fit herself to become his wife by identification with his intellectual interests.

Satiric Thriller

LORDS AND MASTERS. By A. G. Macdonell. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

THIS is either a satiric thriller or a melodramatic satire. The satire is directed primarily against the Dominant Male in all his manifestations, public and private, with special attention to Our Betters who are running the world the way it is going; but Mr. Macdonell's biting wit is not limited even to this wide range of targets; like a good Gael, he is apt to take a crack in passing at any head that happens to be handy. The plot, a different matter altogether, is concerned

Pinchot

A. G. MACDONELL

with the munitions racket. A piratical old gun-runner, James Hanley, who at first seems to be a merely detestable figure, has retired on the proceeds of various shady enterprises. He has, at least, the buccaneer virtues, and when he learns of the discovery of a new and deadly compound, and the plans to exploit it which must inevitably lead to a war, he dies in an attempt to prevent it by a last piratical foray—dies uselessly, for (by what seems a slightly self-conscious touch of irony) the book ends with the next war, and all the stupid soldiers and the too-clever politicians, flourishing like the green bay tree, until their turn to get shot comes up.

On this thread is hung a series of the most brilliant bravura pictures of the army, big business, organized charity, and almost anything Mr. Macdonell happens to think of. It is these scenes which are the essence of the book, and they could not be better. Mr. Macdonell is a master both of hyperbolic extravaganza, and of that rare and most effective device, setting down the exact truth, neither exaggerating nor minimizing, in a sentence that speaks out of the tumult with the cold and concentrated voice of Swift. But enjoyable as is the spectacle of Mr. Macdonell fencing like Cyrano de Bergerac with a dozen opponents at once, the book is not so great as the sum of its parts. The incredible transformation of old James Hanley is only one instance of its lack of unity. A book attacking the way the world is going is not the place for the indefensible admirations which may be proper in an adventure story, for we shall not be saved from our lords and masters either by intelligent old villains like James, or by sweet and stupid women like his daughter. Well, Mr. Macdonell may say, in the words of Mr. Stephen Vincent Benét, "In fact, you will not be saved." But even so, he must make up his mind what it is that he is satirizing. It is true that that is asking him to make up his mind what is wrong with the world, and that is a large order; but it is an order which every satirist must ultimately fill.

A Family Divided by the Loyalties of War

TOLD WITH A DRUM. By Edward Harris Heth. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1937. $2.

Reviewed by JONATHAN DANIELS

BY this time the literate should be familiar enough with war and war-grown bitterness. There is no shell hole so stinking that they have not been invited to enter it. There is no aspect of human hating so loathsome that it has not been displayed to them. Pacifists have screamed like shrapnel-struck horses. The loudly tolerant have sometimes spoken in invective indistinguishable from that of the men they damned. And among them all this book of Edward Harris Heth's is like a whisper in tumult, but a whisper, wise, gentle, beautiful, that in a noisy world needs to be heard. It is too much to hope that it might be heeded.

How wide was that war which only the foolish believe ended at Versailles! And yet in what little space, as small as a child's world, Mr. Heth has captured its terrible essence and found it not loathsome, not ugly, but pitiful as an old man's heart breaking as far off as Wisconsin from Flanders and the Somme. Mr. Heth is certainly not the first who has written of war in the terms of a family divided by the loyalties of war. But his gentle book out of a little boy's memory of the long night that fell on the good, hearty, happy German life of old Milwaukee, when men began to shout "America for the Americans" and turned joyous and dignified old Mayor Tellinger out of the city hall, grows out of the foolishness of a world turned deliberately from good to evil will.

Certainly in these days, when hating Germans is only matched by Germans hating, Mr. Heth's fine portraits of Herr Tellinger and the women of his family in his big house above the lake and the men of his marble-topped table in the big back room at Leopold's recall a way of life which was both German and good. And the narrative of what the war did to that old man, who had so well served the city, which denied him, angered him, and left him disregarded in loneliness, make at least understandable the incredibly ugly things that have grown in the Fatherland in these later days from the old warm-hearted German way of life.

None of these implications does Mr. Heth press. There is not an ounce of obvious propaganda in this book in fulfillment of the high talent he indicated in his "Some We Loved." The ending of war is no more his concern than its tragedy was the making of his actors. But because he has looked at a little group of good, honest, emotional people tortured and twisted by a war far off, he has caught the essential terror of war which lies not in new weapons but in old human hearts.

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Virginia Woolf

(Continued from page 4)

neither robust comedy nor deeply moving tragedy is possible. And what clearly defines her limitations is that this is apparently the only kind of world she is able to create. In "Mrs. Dalloway," to be sure, she introduces one Septimus Smith, a shell-shocked veteran, to supplement the narrowness of Clarissa's range of experience. His madness and suicide would appear to symbolize the brutal realities of the outside world, set Clarissa's party in its right perspective, provide the complement necessary for a whole picture of London. But even this madness has been toned down, purged of all terrifying elements. It is a very gentle, tender, wistful madness, nothing like that represented by Shakespeare and Dostoievsky. It is merely touching, at worst disturbing. It is indeed almost pretty.

To this extent at least Mrs. Woolf shares the frailty of her characters: like them she never surrenders herself to life. She is seemingly as afraid to pull out all the stops and let go. The penalty of her culture and refinement is a too highly self-conscious art, an almost fearful aloofness, in Aiken's words a "dexterous holding of the raw stuff of life at arm's length." Conrad was equally concerned with the "semi-transparent envelope" about human experience, but he strove to penetrate it, sink his teeth in the solid emotional experience from which it emanates; she gives us simply the envelope. She shies away from any experience so uncouth that it cannot be reduced to the tidy proportions of her drawing-room world, so powerful that it might break through the gossamer web of her art. It is, once more, a brilliantly woven web; but it is too fine-spun to contain any big emotion, any violent conflict, any profound or tumultuous experience.

In "A Room of One's Own" Virginia Woolf wrote a notable preamble to a kind of feminine Declaration of Independence. She asked that women writers be granted the same freedom as men, the same right to follow their calling in retirement without being asked to perform more mundane duties. Although her well-mannered plea scarcely created a furor, it was still a challenge; and no doubt it helped to secure a privilege already more generally taken for granted. Mrs. Woolf now has a room of her own. But what does she do in it? She sits and embroiders. She does water colors in pastel shades. She plays minor chords with the soft pedal down. In short, her room might as well be the drawing room of a parsonage, and she serving tea to the ladies of the parish. Essentially, she writes like that busy housewife, mother, and soft-eyed model of Victorian womanhood, Mrs. Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell.

Now, this is a quite legitimate occupation, today as before. I would not join the rude pack howling outside her window and demand of Mrs. Woolf that she go out and rub elbows with the workers, give us a strike with bloody riots, hail the coming Revolution. Yet one wonders at the persistence of this fragile femininity. One wonders why so many other women novelists in rooms of their own also brew genteel tempests in exquisite teapots, and why their works are greeted so rapturously by other emancipated women critics. One is finally tempted to generalize the contribution of women to modern fiction, to group them in the Society of the Daughters of Henry James.

The first of the nine volumes of Dorothy Richardson's "Pilgrimage," a continuous record of the atoms that fell upon the consciousness of one Miriam Henderson, was greeted with some enthusiasm; the discontinuance of this record saddened few readers—was in fact scarcely noticed. At first attracted by the novelty of the method, most readers had all they wanted of Miriam and her sensitive impressions long before the ninth volume. In "The House of Mirth" Edith Wharton made what in its day (1905) seemed a daringly realistic study of high society, and in "Ethan Frome" she wrote a poignant, if too perfectly artistic, tragedy of New England life; but the bulk of her

(Continued on page 16)

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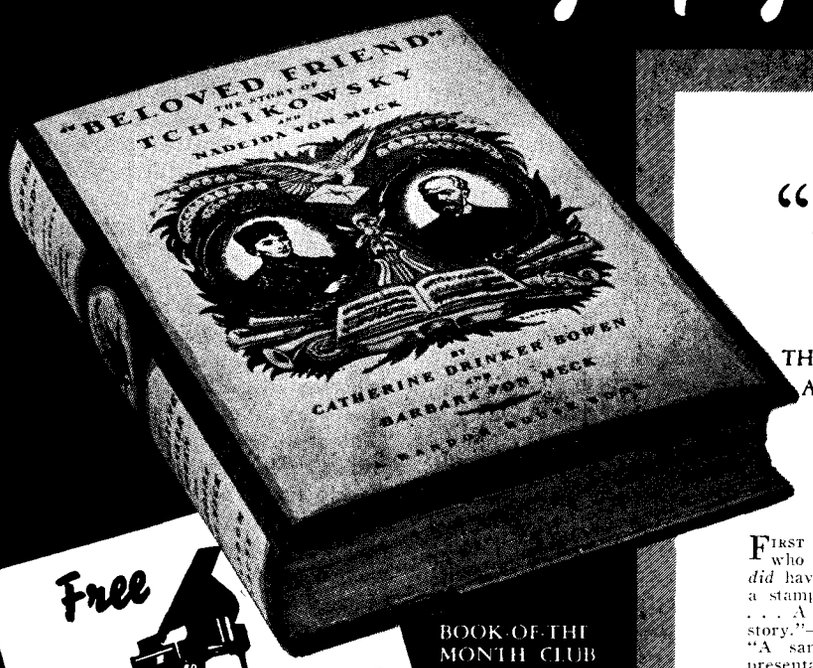

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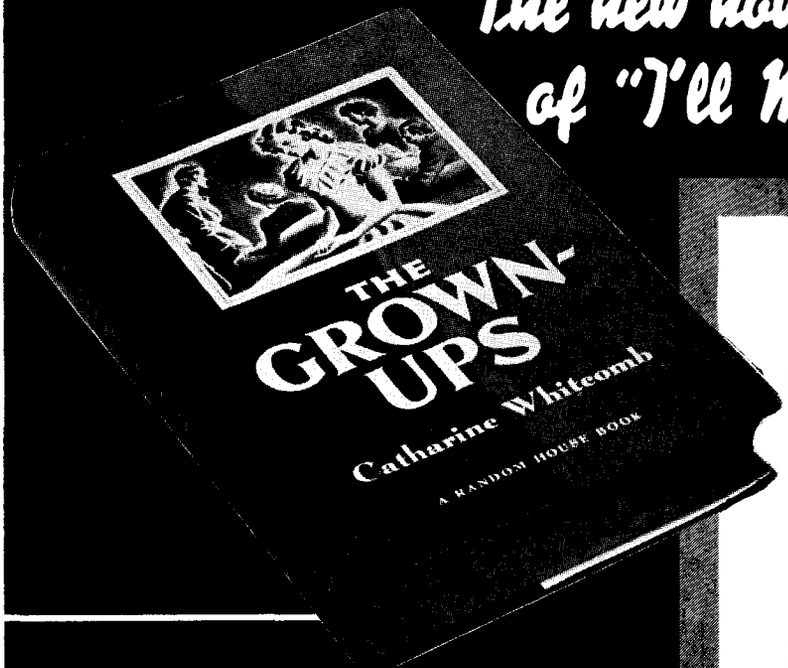

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Virginia Woolf

(*Continued from page 14*)

work concerns the doings of pallid gentlefolk and soon acquires the mustiness that has already sent "The House of Mirth" to the attic. In her early work, especially "My Antonia," Willa Cather wrote simply, robustly, almost grandly the epic of the Mid-western pioneers; she has since withdrawn into a kind of nunnery and now employs her beautiful prose in the embroidery of such wispy stuff as "Shadows on the Rock" and "Lucy Gayheart." Ellen Glasgow has still a vein of iron and irony; but the author of the starkly realistic "Barren Ground" recently gave way to a somewhat petulant outburst against the school of novelists that has been portraying the cruder, harsher realities of Southern life, and now seems more at home among the refined emotions of the decayed gentility in "The Sheltered Life." Similarly one could tick off the names and generalize the achievements of Anne Sedgwick, Rosamond Lehmann, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, and innumerable lesser practitioners of this delicate art. At their worst they seem simply remote, hovering fussily over the fringes of modern life. At their best they have a rare sensitiveness, they write beautifully, they render with nice precision the subtle gradations of perception and sensation—but in this delicious banquet the mere man still yearns for a little red beef and port wine.

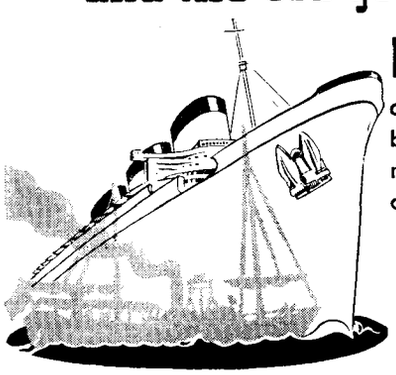
There are, of course, significant exceptions to this generalization. In an earlier age, George Eliot's work has a quality that men are pleased to call masculine; "Wuthering Heights" seethes with an unladylike passion. Among contemporaries, Sigrid Undset writes in a major key; Pearl Buck's "The Good Earth" has a simple strength, as do the novels of Henry Handel Richardson; Evelyn Scott is, if not first-rate, at least not fluttery; and a number have caught fire from the class war. Yet most of the more conspicuous women novelists are like Virginia Woolf still specialists in the wistful, fragile, filmy, dainty. They are Mrs. Gaskells in modern dress. Even the sophisticates, like Tess Slesinger in "The Unpossessed," do not penetrate to the roots of the dilemma of the disenchanted, and they display in their cynicism a quality that a Victorian would instantly recognize as feminine.

The simplest explanation of this quality is that women have for centuries been insulated against the larger, more abstract problems, conditioned to a more direct dependence upon their immediate human environment; and ingrained attitudes cannot be changed overnight by new fashions or even new legislation. Probably, too, women are biologically adapted to different modes of experience. In his fascinating studies of child psychology, Jean Piaget observed that little girls have no single game with as many rules as the little boys themselves have elaborated for marbles, no game with "as fine and consistent an organization and codification." Their ingenuity in hopscotch, for example, is displayed chiefly in the invention of new figures; rules they revise freely, having less regard for their authority and less interest in general concepts. At any rate the fact as we now have it is that women novelists concern themselves primarily with the more concrete and intimate problems of human relationships, less with large issues and ultimate meanings. As Elizabeth Drew remarks, it is difficult to imagine a woman writing a novel like "Lord Jim," "The Brothers Karamazov," or "Arrowsmith," based on the hero's necessity of harmonizing his soul with some ideal concept apart from the practical problems of everyday living. And as Edwin Muir admits after a eulogy of Virginia Woolf, "The one important quality of the critic which she lacks is the power of wide and illuminating generalization." In short, the explanation of their work in the novel is also the explanation of why there are women columnists but few philosophers, of why there are women singers and musicians but few composers, of why—though for centuries they have been trained to paint—there are few great women painters. They reproduce with consummate sensitiveness; they seldom create on a large scale or in the light of a large ideal concept.

I repeat—and not out of chivalry—that all this by no means justifies a contemptuous attitude towards the women novelists. Their province is a legitimate one in the midst of whatever crises or revolutions; and if it is difficult, in the face of "Remembrance of Things Past" or "Death in Venice," to continue romantically to attribute to them a delicacy and sensitiveness beyond the experience of man, it is foolish to scorn the charm of their work or deny its validity within their range. Moreover, they have generally a sureness and directness, a balance and poise, that are restful in a restless age. If at times they settle into superficial and depressing "soundness," at best they have the sanity that comes from a clear perception of the simple realities and simple values of ordinary existence. Precisely because they are chiefly concerned with immediate realities, the women writers are less likely to be distracted or thwarted by the profound uncertainties of this era. Yet for this same reason they are less significant for the critic concerned with the deeper issues of modern literature and life. These issues have no doubt given to many men a sickly and oppressive self-consciousness; but they are nevertheless urgent, they must somehow be met. Virginia Woolf and her sisters contribute little but their incidental refinements of method and manner.

Herbert J. Muller is a member of the department of English of Purdue University.

TIMES CHANGE
and the old gives way to the New!



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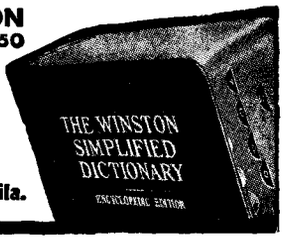

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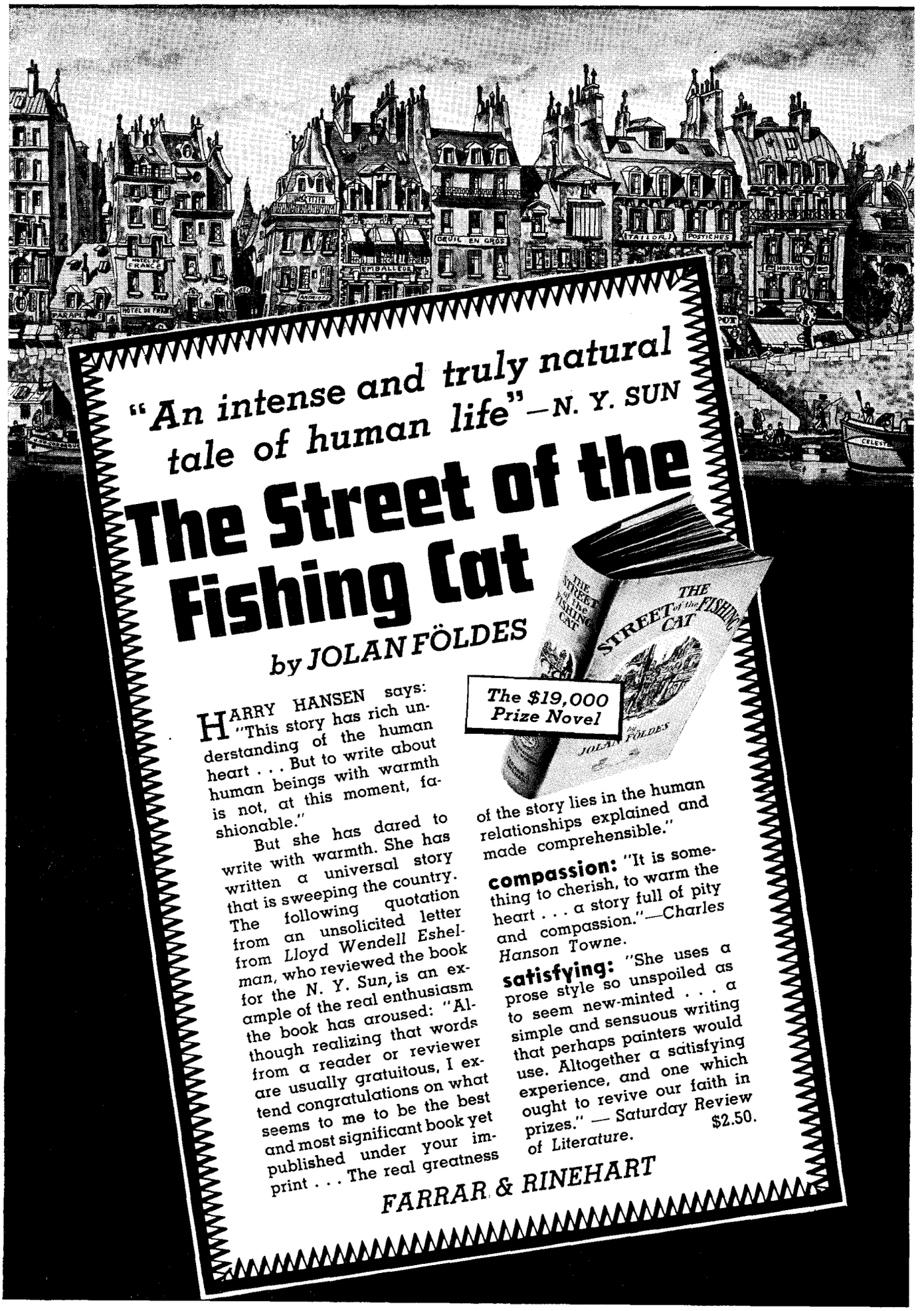
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The Amen Corner

The fact that the Oxonian is rushing this copy to meet a deadline irresistibly reminds him of that engrossing and disturbing book which the Oxford Press has scheduled for publication on February 4th, *Zero Hour* by Richard Freund:[1] engrossing because it is the most luminous guide he has yet seen through the confusion of world politics (which most people concede to have approached breathtakingly close to the point where only a violent solution seems possible); disturbing because this apprehensive view is demonstrated so quietly, so convincingly, and without any discoverable axe-grinding. Just by way of introducing the author, he was born an Austrian, brought up in Germany, and lately naturalized an Englishman. "His claim to impartiality is fully justified."[2]

Being in a freely[3] associative mood, the Oxonian finds himself thinking of another, and recently published Oxford book, *The Final Struggle: Being Countess Tolstoy's Diary for 1910.*[4] The tragedy of the last year of Tolstoy's life (1910) has never been fully understood up till now, and besides unfolding an incredibly gripping story, this edition of Countess Tolstoy's diary for that fatal year, together with the numerous appropriate insertions from Tolstoy's own, should do a great service to his memory by revealing the sincerity with which he attempted to adapt his life to his convictions. "It is the most moving and tragic book that I have read for many years."[5]

Now for a deep plunge into the past when England was a Roman colony. The Oxonian was a little startled and somewhat saddened to read in *Roman Britain and The English Settlement* by R. G. Collingwood and J. N. L. Myres,[6] the first volume of the *Oxford History of England,*[7] that King Arthur, instead of being, as he had always believed, about the first of the Englishmen, was in all probability "the last of the Romans . . . the last to understand Roman ideas and use them for the good of the British people. . . . His name, Artorius, is a recognized though not very common family name. In the second half of the fifth century, when he was born, a person bearing such a *nomen* is likeliest to have come from a region, and a class in that region, where romanization was still relatively high. He was therefore probably the son of a good family in one of the *civitates* of the lowland zone, and we may write off the later legends of his noble parentage and birthplace as fictions designed to give him a more honourable pedigree."[8]

Vale!

The Oxonian.

P. S. Over our shoulder[9] we must tell you that along towards the middle of March we are publishing what we consider one of the most important books in years: *The Private Manufacture of Armaments* by Philip Noel-Baker. This first volume will deal with the moral and political aspects of private manufacture of arms. A second volume, to come out in the Fall, will deal with the economic, industrial and technical aspects and will discuss the alleged importance of private manufacture for national defence.

(1) $2.50. (2) *The Times* (London). (3) very. (4) Translated with an Introduction by Aylmer Maude, and a Preface by Sergei Tolstoy, $2.50. (5) *David Garnett* in *The New Statesman.* (6) $5.00. (7) Already published: *The Reign of Queen Elizabeth* 1558-1603 by J. B. Black. $5.00. *The Later Stuarts* 1660-1714 by G. N. Clark. $5.00. England, 1870-1914, by R. C. K. Ensor. $6.00. (8) p. 321. (9) The boy is here for the copy.

A Great Legal Quarry

FEDERAL JUSTICE. By Homer Cummings and Carl McFarland. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1937. $4.

Reviewed by Charles Bunn

THE new quarters of the Department of Justice in Washington have made available for the first time a mass of manuscript material from which this volume by the Attorney General and Mr. McFarland is the first to benefit.

What the authors have attempted in their book is a history of the Department (and of its predecessor, the office of the Attorney General) and of the main activities of both since the beginning of the Government. The canvas is vast, and crowded with detail. For it is a characteristic of a public law office that to and through it crowd the persons, problems, scandals, policies, and especially the controversies of the time. And when the office in question is the Department of Justice of the United States, and the time is from 1789 to 1936, you may be sure that there is plenty there.

Edmund Randolph was the first Attorney General. He, and his successors for almost thirty years, functioned without a clerk, without an office, and without any record books whatever. Accordingly, when William Wirt became Attorney General in 1817, he reported to President Monroe that there was not to be found "any trace of a pen indicating in the slightest manner any one act of advice or opinion which had been given by any one of my predecessors from the first foundation of the federal government to the moment of my inquiry." Wirt thought this scandalous, and he bought himself a book and recorded on the fly leaf his determination "to keep a regular record of every official opinion which I shall give while I hold this office, for the use of my successor." Thus the first foundations were laid for the elementary requirement of consistency in official legal advice "to the President and the Heads of Departments." Shortly thereafter, Congress supplied him with a room, one clerk, and a fund of five hundred dollars for fuel and supplies. With not much more than that equipment, he and his successors carried on for many years.

The cases of the Government in the Supreme Court of the United States were argued by the Attorney General in person. But the Government was party to proceedings in the other federal courts throughout the country. These were handled (and still are) by the local United States District Attorneys, appointed indeed by the President, but each one chosen from and serving in his district. Over their selection, guidance, and discipline, the Attorney General had for many years no authority whatever. No more had he over the law officers of the various executive departments, of whom for a long time the Solicitor of the Treasury was the most important. It was not until 1871, when the Department of Justice was organized, that these various other law officers were required to report to the Attorney General, and the Department began to be responsible for the conduct of at least the major part of the legal business of the Government. The first federal prison for other than military prisoners was commenced in 1895, and the Bureau of Investigation was established in 1909. By this time, the Department had become one of the important branches of the executive establishment, and the Attorney General no longer merely the Government's chief lawyer, but the administrative head of a large and complex organization, charged broadly with the conduct of all the litigation in which the Government was interested, the care of prisoners and prisons, the investigation and prosecution of Federal offenses, the determination (subject to the courts) of all varieties of legal questions submitted by the President and the Departments, the appointment, control, and accounting of the marshals of the Federal courts, and even to a large extent the selection of the judges of those courts. These responsibilities require great gifts, and there is no more important member of the Cabinet of any modern President than the Attorney General.

The book deals with this development, and it deals at greater length with the substance of the business that has flowed from time to time through the Department. Here are the war of 1812, the Second Bank of the United States, the fugitive slave law, the civil war and reconstruction, western lands, oil, mines, and forests, the trusts, the railroads, labor unions, and the great press of controversy, policy, and personality that makes up our busy history. The record is condensed, exciting, and, so far as I have the capacity to judge, is accurate. The book represents a vast amount of careful digging. It is a good job and a credit to the men who wrote it. If we are lucky, it will be the first of many based on these same records.

Austrians at War

AND WE ARE CIVILIZED. By Wolfgang Ackerman. New York: Covici-Friede. 1936. $2.50.

BOOKS on war, and especially on *the* war, have not failed to emphasize the horrors and torments of conflict. Doctor Ackermann's book likewise, gives plenty of horrifying description. The emphasis in it, however, is on the inefficiency, cowardice, and general disreputability of the Austrian officer. Austrian inefficiency, one may gather from this book, was responsible for more Austrian loss than the enemy on any front. There is nothing surprising in Doctor Ackermann's account. Anyone who believes that war is the foul and dirty depravity which Doctor Ackermann depicts will find confirmation in his book. People who think that war is a Grand Thing won't read it.

It seems to become increasingly obvious that the only people affected by truthful accounts of warfare are people who need no conversion. It seems more and more likely that Mark Twain was right when he said that only laughter would rid the human race of its torments. Probably in the long run the War Song of Dinas Vawr is a more effective piece of writing than anything that has come out of the last great conflict.

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Anti-Semitism

SOME OF MY BEST FRIENDS ARE JEWS. By Robert Gessner. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1936. $3.

Reviewed by N. L. ROTHMAN

IT has been pointed out often enough that anti-Semitism stirs not the mind but the viscera, and that correction, when it is applied, will have to reach the very stimuli of disorder rather than the minds of the disordered. But there exists, among those Jews and Gentiles alike who deplore race hatred, a fatal division of opinion as to the nature of these stimuli, and their antidote. Is the Jew feared because he seems to be achieving a disproportionate amount of power? In reply there have appeared many well-meaning refutations, which offer statistical proof to the contrary for those who will certainly not read it, while apologizing for (and thereby admitting) the Jews' "differentness." Is the Jew hated because he has no homeland and is not assimilable? The Zionists agree, and point to Palestine. Give the Jews a homeland, they cry, and the problem is solved.

Robert Gessner's book has grown out of his pilgrimage across Europe and Asia in search of the truth about this. What he found in Europe most of us know, but his discoveries in Palestine will prove disturbing and provocative to many. He found that the Jews have taken all the evils of Europe along with them. There are ghettoes in Tel-Aviv, where live the poorest Jews and the scorned Arabs. There is fascism in Palestine, with chauvinist, brown-shirted Jewish patriots drilling with muskets, shouting for expansion, raising race barriers against the Arabs. There is an exploiting, profiteer class in Palestine, and a sweated laboring class working for fifty cents to a dollar a day. There is land speculation, inflation, a paradise for the wealthy Jew and a familiar degradation for the poor. Those who may wish to gainsay this will have to read and argue away this thoroughly documented book.

There remains a final theory to be considered. Are the Jews persecuted because they are a convenient lightning rod with which to divert the restlessness of a people, when crises impend? Mr. Gessner looks back at his investigations, at the Dreyfus case, the Zion protocols, the Russian pogroms, the Hitler purges, and finds the idea more than tenable. It offers not only a diagnosis but a therapy as well. If anti-Semitism is a concomitant of class society, then we can expect to find it absent from a classless society. He went to the Soviet republics for his answer, and found it. He found the Jew a happy and respected citizen in Moscow, and creator of an autonomous province in Birobidjan. Here, too, the documentation is thorough. Mr. Gessner's study of his problem is consistently inductive, and if he emerges with a classless society as the only cure for anti-Semitism it is because the discoverable facts seem to him to point irresistibly in that direction. He has marshaled his facts in an engrossing narrative (to which the satirical title does scant justice), and embellished them with a set of extraordinarily fine photographs.

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Inquiries, accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope, should be directed to Miss Loveman, in care of The Saturday Review.

The Civil War in Fiction and Poetry

Mrs. C. D. H. of Hooper, Neb., *writes: "Will you kindly give me the title of a book that would help me in the study of Benét's* JOHN BROWN'S BODY*? Also a list of novels and narrative poems dealing with the Civil War period."*

I PRESUME that by "a book that would help in the study of JOHN BROWN'S BODY" Mrs. H. means some biography or history that would give her the background material against which she can check the chronicle of the poem. The best life of the hero of Harper's Ferry remains that by Oswald Garrison Villard published some years ago and issued in a revised edition (Doubleday, Doran) in 1929. If, however, that proves too long for her needs she will find an article embodying the latest findings of research in the DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY (Scribners), written by Allen Johnson, editor of that magnificent enterprise until death put an end to his labors. A book that should prove interesting to read in connection with Mr. Benét's spirited poetical narrative is Leonard Ehrlich's novel entitled GOD'S ANGRY MAN (Simon & Schuster), a vivid and emotionally powerful tale which rests on a careful study of the facts of history. As to narrative poems dealing with the Civil War period there are two (brief, to be sure, and not epical like Mr. Benét's chronicle in verse) which spring to mind at the mention of John Brown. The first is Whittier's short "John Brown of Osawatomie," which recounts Brown's kissing of a negro child as "they led him out to die," and the second Edmund Clarence Stedman's "How Old Brown Took Harper's Ferry." These are to be found, of course, in the volumes of their authors' works, and in various anthologies, among others in Stevenson's HOME BOOK OF VERSE (Holt). There, too, are included such other Civil War poems as Stedman's "Kearney at Seven Pines," Whittier's "Barbara Frietchie," that standby of all school readers and its companion favorite, "Sheridan's Ride," by Thomas Buchanan Read, and W. H. Thompson's "High Tide at Gettysburg." Other poems, not to be found however, in this anthology, are Brownell's "The Bay Fight" and "The River Fight." The author of these, who came to the attention of Farragut by a rhymed version of the Admiral's General Orders published in the Hartford, Conn., *Evening Press*, became through Farragut's interest an ensign on his flagship where he wrote the above mentioned poems, as well as many others, practically in the heat of battle. "The Bay Fight" depicts the Battle of Mobile Bay, "The River Fight" the conflict between the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac*. A selection of Brownell's poems has been published under the title LINES OF BATTLE (Houghton Mifflin).

So much for poetry dealing with the Civil War. Now for fiction. The classic of the conflict is, of course, Stephen Crane's THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE (Appleton-Century), a tale concentrated almost entirely on the Battle of Chancellorsville and a remarkable depiction of the mind of a soldier, albeit the author knew his subject only at second hand. To write of Margaret Mitchell's GONE WITH THE WIND (Macmillan) is to waste words, so omnipresent is that record-breaking book. Even in England it is now mounting into the best-seller lists. Outstanding among other novels of the period which have appeared in the past few years are MacKinlay Kantor's grim but powerful LONG REMEMBER (Coward-McCann), which portrays the horror of war even more through the suffering behind the lines than on the battle field, and James Boyd's MARCHING ON (Scribners), a picture of North Carolina just before and during the war and of ardors and endurances in battle and in a Yankee prison. More romantic and sentimental in its approach to the Civil War is Stark Young's SO RED THE ROSE (Scribners). Older books on the period which had big sales in their day and which still enjoy a large public are Winston Churchill's THE CRISIS (Macmillan) and Mary Johnston's THE LONG ROLL and its sequel, CEASE FIRING (Little, Brown). Ellen Glasgow's THE BATTLE GROUND (Doubleday, Doran), is in its first half devoted to pre-secession Virginia, and in its second to the state during the war period, with its stress going on the hospitals, the bivouacs, and the non-combatants rather than on the fighting itself. The foregoing are, of course, only a few of the many novels to be found on the Civil War but they are among the more effective portrayals of the great conflict.

A BALANCED RATION FOR A WEEK'S READING

FOOL OF VENUS. By George Cronyn. *Covici-Friede.*

PHANTOM CROWN. By Bertita Harding. *Bobbs-Merrill.*

THE SIGNATURE OF PAIN. By Alan Porter. *Day.*

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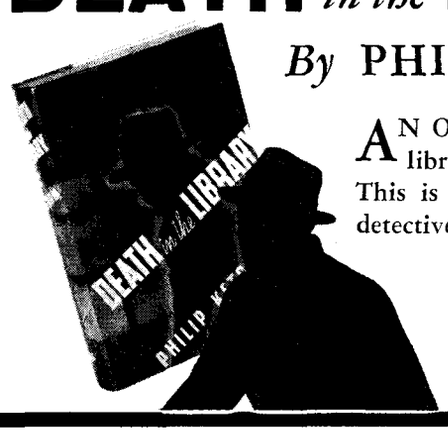

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An Epic of America

THE HONOURABLE COMPANY: A History of the Hudson's Bay Company. By Douglas MacKay. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company. 1936. $3.75.

Reviewed by MERRILL DENISON

FEW more interesting or important books have ever come out of Canada than this brilliant narrative of the Hudson's Bay Company written by one of the latter-day servants of that glamorous and hitherto-secretive trading corporation of the frozen north. Of moment to scholars and historians because it is the first book to appear since the archives of the Company were thrown open to research, it is far more than an able presentation of long buried documents. It is, as a matter of fact, one of those occasional masterpieces of popular historical writing which come about through the combination of a vivid narrative style, a passionate personal enthusiasm for the subject matter, and a scholar's indefatigable zeal for accurate research.

To anyone with a knowledge of the long and complicated story of the Canadian fur trade, the mere organization of material in Mr. MacKay's book calls forth the highest admiration. Even were "The Honourable Company" hard reading, which it most certainly is not, it would still be remarkable if only for the clarity with which complex and conflicting historical incidents are arranged and presented. But in addition to packing all the interesting and pertinent facts of the Company's two centuries and a half of adventurous career into 345 pages, Mr. MacKay has succeeded in combining romance and economic determinism, mosquitoes and the lure of the unknown, yearly dividends over a period of 252 years and the roistering wilderness jollifications of voyageurs and wintering partners, with a sense of balance that both delights and amazes one.

So complete and satisfying is the book that one wishes Mr. MacKay or his publisher had allowed another fifty odd pages so that the author might have discussed at greater length the story of the Company and Oregon, the influence of the Scotch-American fur-traders in keeping Canada British during the American Revolution, the modern scientific fur farms now operated by the Company to replace and preserve the fur-bearing animals which 225 years of unconsidered exploitation practically exterminated, the curious inheritance by the North West Mounted Police in 1873 of certain of the obligations of the Great Charter of 1670. But these are the criticisms of a caviler. If the book receives but a fraction of the public acclaim its true worth warrants, it should be only the forerunner of other books by the same author dealing with the same general field. It is generously provided with maps and with an excellent bibliography, and in the appendix are to be found interesting data dealing with the earnings and capital structure of the Company since 1670—material hitherto unpublished.

Merrill Denison is the author of "Advancing America, the Drama of Transportation and Communication."

One year ago

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The New Books

Biography

ANTON CHEKHOV: The Voice of Twilight Russia. By Princess Nina Andronikova Toumanova. Columbia University Press. 1937. $3.

In October, 1903, half a year before his death, Chekhov wrote to Nemirovich-Danchenko, of the Moscow Art Theatre, "I am writing about life, this is a gray everyday life indeed, but not an eternal whimpering. They always interpret me as a lachrymose writer, yet I have written several volumes of gay stories. Why then do the critics represent me as a weeper?"

Princess Toumanova quotes this and other protestations in her book yet she pays not the slightest attention to Chekhov's insistence that he be regarded as a humorist as well as a serious writer. She accepts in her subtitle, "The Voice of Twilight Russia," the established conception of Chekhov in this country. In fact she goes a great deal further. Her book is not merely serious, it is a chant of gloom; written, incidentally, in excellent idiomatic English. But there is not the slightest response to the man who insisted on his "gay" writings; or the delightful whimsies of the author of a play entitled, "Not for Nothing Did the Hen Sing"; or the man who only a few hours before his death told his wife such funny stories that she failed to hear the dinner bell. It should be impossible to write of Chekhov, as our present author has done, without paying attention to the blithe side of the man. But this book is all sadness.

It is true that Chekhov's plays deal with indolent passivity among the intellectuals of his time. But he did not mean, as Princess Toumanova would have us assume, that all Russian intellectuals were of this type. In his play "Ivanov" the middle-aged hero shoots himself not, as the author of the present book would have us believe, because he has not the manhood to go through with his marriage to the young girl, Masha. On the contrary he kills himself because he discovers that Masha does not love him and is marrying him out of a sense of duty. His death might be called an act of will, but Princess Toumanova sees nothing but lack of will and energy in the Russian character. It shows again in her account of the quarrel between Chekhov and his old friend Suvorin, editor of the conservative paper *Novaye Vremya*, on the subject of Captain Dreyfus. Chekhov was convinced of Dreyfus's innocence, but Suvorin assailed Dreyfus as a traitor. Princess Toumanova says, "It is hard to see how Chekhov, gentle and indifferent, could break with an old friend on account of a person strange to both of them."

Not all was twilight and feebleness in the Russia of Chekhov's time, just as not all was sadness in the man himself. Korolenko wrote of Chekhov at the age of thirty: "It seemed that from his eyes flowed an inexhaustible stream of wit and spontaneous joy. Yet one could feel in him something deeper which was later to unfold." The deeper things did unfold later, but without destroying the wit and spontaneous joy.

M. G.

HENRIETTA MARIA. By Carola Oman. Macmillan. 1936. $5.

This book is the complete history of Charles I's queen, Henrietta Maria. Its author does not undertake to glorify a romantic heroine of exaggerated proportions, but to tell the truth, in so far as research can uncover it and scholarship reconstruct it, about a woman who was a queen and who could not help playing a part in the momentous events of her times. It is skilfully constructed and written with epigrammatic terseness. The characters are all deftly realized, and the background is handled convincingly and not too exhaustively. The queen stands out in bold relief; it is her personality, with all its defects and inadequacies, that is Miss Oman's main theme, and this she presents with irreproachable candor.

"*Chic, petite, difficile*, and *dévote*"—these untranslatable adjectives are the best description of Henrietta Maria. She was French to the core. She never understood her husband's subjects and they never understood her. The common people openly disliked her; the courtiers admired but mistrusted her, even when, in the days of her reversals, they were giving their gallant cavalier support to her cause. She was beautiful and charming, but she did not inspire fidelity. She won no man's heart but her husband's, and she wanted no other. Her devotion to him, after its tardy beginning, was her ruling passion, after which came her devotion to the Roman church. Both her passions led her to meddle with politics, at which she was amazingly inept. All her ventures in the world of affairs were fraught with disaster, but she could not

Pushkin
By Ernest J. Simmons
In this first full-length biography, in English, of the greatest poet of pre-revolutionary Russia, Mr. Simmons has presented a brilliant account of a stormy career. The reader follows with breathless interest the love intrigues that Pushkin summarized in his Don Juan list, his heart-breaking days in exile, his persecution by the tsar's secret police, the final duel forced upon him by the frivolousness of his beautiful wife, and the creation of his marvelous poetry, such as the world classics, *Eugene Onegin* and *Boris Godunov*.
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desist from interfering. Her husband's position, finally his life, and the welfare of her church were at stake. She could not stand idly by. She had to be active, even if her activity inevitably brought failure. Hers was the last inexorable nobility of the wife and the religious martyr, beautiful but mistaken, and was of a piece with the daring devotion which his followers lavished upon her husband. It was not unfitting that she should have been the queen of the cavaliers.

C. D. A.

Psychology

KEEPING YOUR CHILD NORMAL. By Bernard Sachs, M.D. Paul B. Hoeber (Harpers.) 1936. $1.50

This book is written by the most noted neurologist and psychiatrist in America, recently President of the New York Academy of Medicine, and is therefore an authoritative book on the subject of keeping children normal. It should be in the hands of all parents and teachers. It is written in excellent style and sums up with wisdom gained from wide experience, and an unusual gift of common sense, the most important data on the subjects of infancy and early childhood, the school age child, heredity and environment, problem children as truants and delinquents, and the periods of puberty and adolescence. On all these matters Dr. Sachs throws the clear light of sense and logic. The final and longest chapter in the book is devoted to the abuses of psychoanalysis. In common with a growing number of critics in the medical profession, Professor Sachs is appalled at the disruption of families brought about by psychoanalysis (divorce, etc.), the number of psychoanalytic suicides, the cases of insanity developed by these destructive methods, and the tainting of some teachers by untrue and illogical deductions which they seek to have applied to our youth in educational institutions. If these Freudian ideas were true and a real addition to scientific psychology they would have been accepted universally by the medical profession and psychiatrists and neurologists in particular. The so-called "new psychology" is not science but a cult, a dangerous cult, with scarcely any following outside of the United States, where new religions take root and ramify with too great prodigality.

F. P., M.D.

Travel

PORTUGAL: A BOOK OF FOLKWAYS. By Rodney Gallop. Macmillan. 1936. $3.50.

Mr. Gallop has a jackdaw's genius for collecting odd items—except that he comes by his treasures honestly, industriously, either through personal discovery or by delving in duly credited sources. Striking it rich in an upper corner of the Peninsula, he produced "A Book of the Basques" which, published in 1930, remains the most remarkable mosaic of information about the character and customs of Europe's oldest race available in English. As an interpretation that book possesses the special merit of having been written in the light of long residence and an acquaintance with the mysteries of the Basque language.

Now, for an intended companion volume, he shifts to Portugal. He has brought along his same modus operandi, and Mrs. Gallop's thumbnail sketches of costumes, peasant implements, etc., are as spiritedly helpful as those which dappled the Basque pages; nevertheless, for all their zeal, this just isn't their hobby country: they are like bibliomaniacs trying to get excited over postage stamps. Which, to a reviewer whose addiction to Portugal is shameless and unreasoning, seems utterly incomprehensible.

Even so, Mr. Gallop has gathered well. He offers a veritable museum of curiosities—queer beliefs, archaic high jinks, traditional balladry, songs and dances (including a hip-slapping affair called the *arromba* which possibly has Cuban connections)—all neatly sorted and explained.

Certain minor errors, such as a mild howler concerning Inês de Castro and the attribution of the Victorian-Moorish rotundities of Monserrate to William Beckford (dead long before, and never the owner of that estate) might have been corrected by the author's Portuguese friends to whom the book is dedicated. But Portuguese friends never set one straight. They are slaves of a folkway which insists that they perish sooner than risk seeming rude.

L. M.

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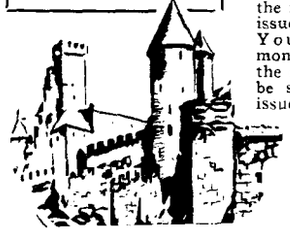

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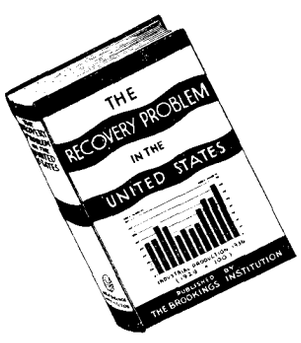

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WHY not take advantage of the unusually high reader interest in the PERSONALS in the SRL? Consider (if you are hopelessly commercial) the equally low rate of only seven cents a word. You will find all the details necessary for inserting your advertisement in the second column on page 26 of this issue.

Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

PROFESSOR HAROLD W. THOMPSON (State College, Albany) very justly razzes poor old Q. for misplacing the world's most convivial birthday. On the date itself he wrote:—

"Coom, coom, laad. I am willing to let you take *Say when* from Bassanio (Merchant, I, 1, 66) and give first honors to sweet Master Herrick. But not even you, *atavis edite regibus*, shall move the birthday of Burns from the 25th to the 26th.

"*Parcus deorum cultor et infrequens*, I am a member of the Albany Burns Club, which, like nearly everything else here, is the oldest in the United States. Tonight we keep the revels, with toddie from the poet's own ladle; I shall pour a libation for you to the insulted spirit. At our first dinner there were 15 'regular' toasts,—the last being to the Ladies of Albany. There were also 17 'impromptu toasts,' 2 recitations, 28 songs by individuals, and 'several others' by the Club in chorus. The writer of the minutes says: 'David M. Barnes gave the last song, and, as the writer had to join him in the perpetration of it, he is not prepared to say whether it was good, bad, or indifferent, but thinks it was all three.' Most of the members went home at four that year, but in 1859, when the Great Centenary Dinner was held and *Auld lang syne* was sung from Burns's manuscript, then in the possession of the Hon. J. V. L. Pruyn, some of the diners did not reach home for three days."

Book-of-the-Month Club Fellowships

☞The most interesting literary event of the past week was the first annual award (January 30) of the committee (30 writers and reviewers from all over the country) who had agreed to make the difficult choice of four recipients for the Book-of-the-Month Club Fellowships. 22 members of the committee were present in person at the meeting under the chairmanship of Henry S. Canby; the others sent their votes by mail.

☞Only books published between May 1, 1935, and Sept. 1, 1936, were considered by the committee; but the awards were made not solely on these books but on the individual author's past achievement and promise for the future. And only books which "had been insufficiently read by the general public" were admitted to the competition. To be precise, books which had sold 5,000 copies or over were excluded.

☞By careful preliminary consideration the field had been narrowed to fourteen writers. It had been wondered whether so diverse a committee, considering books equally dissimilar, could reach clear majority choices. It is interesting to be informed that from the first ballot there was no doubt as to the four leading candidates. Accordingly the four fellowships ($2,500 each) were awarded to Robinson Jeffers (*Solstice and Other Poems*), Katherine Anne Porter (*Flowering Judas*), James T. Farrell (*Studs Lonigan*) and Paul Sears (*Deserts on the March*).

☞Honorable mention was made of the four runners-up in the voting, who were Charles G. Finney (*The Circus of Dr. Lao*), Zora Neale Hurston (*Mules and Men*), Jesse Stuart (*Head o' W-Hollow*), and George Milburn (*Catalogue*). ☞In addition to the regular Book-of-the-Month Club jury, and the book columnists of the New York press, the committee included several distinguished co-opts, e.g., Sinclair Lewis, Ellen Glasgow, Pearl Buck, Hervey Allen, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Simeon Strunsky, Michael Williams, Carl Van Doren, Burton Rascoe. Edward Weeks of the *Atlantic Monthly* came from Boston for the meeting, and Joseph Henry Jackson from San Francisco. There was general satisfaction that the committee reached its decisions so amicably. Harry Scherman, president of the Book-of-the-Month Club, announces the award as an annual event.

☞Clever, we thought, the Valentine band the publishers have put on copies of *Live Alone and Like It*. With the usual sagittary Cupid and heart it says *To My Valentine—with the fond hope that you will like it—but not too much.*

☞The Q. Associates direct the attention of their musical clients to Random House's prize contest—first prize a grand piano—for the best answers, in 300 words or less, to any one of three questions based on *Beloved Friend* by Bowen and Von Meck.

1. What is the psychological explanation of Mme. von Meck's abrupt ending of her romantic relations with Tchaikowsky, and is there any clue to her decision in the revelations given as to her personality?

2. Was Mme. Meck's infatuation solely with Tchaikowsky's music, as she thought, or was she really in love with him, in spite of the fact that she was careful never to speak to him or meet him?

3. Did Mme. von Meck's patronage of Tchaikowsky have, on the whole, a beneficial or a harmful effect upon the quality of his music?

All entries must be submitted by April 15th, 1937. The judges are Jascha Heifetz, John Barbirolli, Lawrence Gilman, Deems Taylor, and Robert K. Haas. Second and third prizes are recordings of Tschaikowsky compositions.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 149)

THOMAS CHATTERTON—"LAST WILL."

To Barrett next, he has my thanks sincere
For all the little knowledge I had here.
. . . Could it here succeed
When scarcely twenty in the town can read?
Could knowledge bring in interest to maintain
The wild expenses of a poet's brain?

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The Compleat Collector

RARE BOOKS: CONDUCTED BY JOHN T. WINTERICH

In alternate weeks this Department is devoted to Fine Printing and is conducted by Carl Purington Rollins

Water

MORE pressing and immediate concerns than arts and letters claim humanity's notice in the crawling horror of the Mississippi Basin. Not even when the waters have gone down will it be possible to estimate the number of books that have become shapeless pulp. For certainly books have been among the abundant inanimate casualties. Taut-nerved householders, at the very instant of rescue, have scurried back into crumbling dwellings to save pathetic trivia, but not a single press dispatch has mentioned books. Yet hundreds of family Bibles must have weighted down the rescue boats, along with collies and canaries.

To inspect an air photograph of the heart of Louisville and see its pleasant public library (on College Street, isn't it?) surrounded by what is technically the Ohio River is not pleasant. Presumably there was time to remove the contents to safe quarters higher in the building. How did Stewart's, on Twelfth Street, fare? In the Books Wanted section of the latest pre-flood *Publisher's Weekly* (when it was still possible to lunch bountifully at the Pendennis Club, and before Churchill Downs became fit only for sea-horses) Stewart's advertised for a copy of Peter Newell's "Slant Book." Directly thereafter the major requirement of the moment in Louisville became less book and more slant. If the Compleat Collector recalls aright, there was also a good little second-hand bookshop on Liberty Street, and Liberty is much closer to the river—the river that was—than the Library or Stewart's. What has been its fate? Only reconstructed brontosauri are more different to move in a hurry than masses of books—and what chance books with a populous city pleading for food, clothing, and a path to shelter?

Nothing can work a book quite such hideous hurt as a thorough soaking. Fire is a thousand times preferable. A brisk little conflagration can travel up a set of shelves and peel off backstrips with the neat efficiency of a patent pea-sheller—and leave the books eminently fit for rebinding. But water gets to the heart of things. It is the most capable of suppressers, the least combattable of censors. It is utterest ruination.

On Every Parlor Table

AMERICAN LITERARY ANNUALS AND GIFT BOOKS 1825-1865. By Ralph Thomson. New York: H. W. Wilson Company. 1936. $2.25.

On July 11, 1838, General William Henry Harrison, with the Presidency and death not three years away, presented to Miss Margaretta Wilson a copy of the *Token,* inscribing it as "from the friend of her father." True, it was a little out of date, being the issue for 1836, but presumably it was a new copy.

The accolade thus bestowed on the *Token* by the hand and sign of authority was well deserved. The gift annual had for half a generation been one of the

(*Continued on next page*)

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
BLACK LAND, WHITE LAND *H. C. Bailey* (Crime Club: $2.)	Amateur archeologist finds bones in Durshire landslide which send Mr. Fortune on trail of old murder leading to some new ones.	If you survive slow beginning and Mr. F's mannerisms, you'll find plenty of excitement and a first-class double mystery.	Expert
THE THORNE THEATRE MYSTERY *Joshua Willard* (Phoenix Press: $2.)	Three die in theatre—but show goes on—and Doc Glover finally stops thorough-going killer.	Rather familiar routine of back-stage amorous intrigue, road-house philanderings, wages of sin, and so on.	Colorless
THE DARK SHIPS *Hulbert Footner* (Harpers: $2.)	Death of villainous swindler and gal abductor solved by Treas. Dept. sleuth in Chesapeake.	Some spooky scenes on rusting steamers, much hide and seek with the law, and a not too fervid romance.	Enjoyable
IT HAPPENED AT THE LAKE *Joseph T. Shaw* (Dodd, Mead: $2.)	Unhappy guests at country estate of blackmailing Boss Burke see him die and fledgling scribe "solve" the killing.	Melodramatic mixture of crooked finance, blackmail, drugged liker, attempted seductions, whizzing bullets, and young love.	This way out

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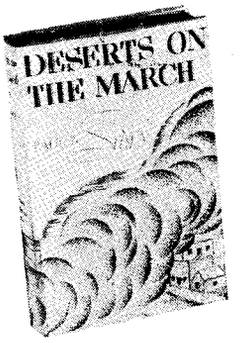

". . . the sins of our fathers . . ."

FLASH! In view of the present flood conditions, your correspondents telegraphed DR. PAUL SEARS, author of *Deserts On The March,* for a brief statement of the significance and background of the disaster, a summary that any layman could understand.

DR. SEARS is doing special government research work in the field of soil erosion and conservation of natural resources, and is recognized as an outstanding scientific authority. He is on the faculty of The University of Oklahoma, and the press of that university is associated with *The Inner Sanctum* in the publication of *Deserts On The March,* which has been described as presenting "the greatest physical drama ever enacted—the conflict of man and his environment."

Here is part of his telegraphed answer:

"The sins of our fathers are being visited upon the heads of their children. The raging waters of today are the price of waving fields of grain, of forests destroyed, of roads and cities thrown together with no far-seeing plan. To an eye trained to read the landscape, this tragic disaster of flood has but one meaning. Our continent is sick.

"The floods of today are boiling over a land stripped of its cover and so robbed of its moisture that wells must sink from twelve to sixty feet deeper than ever before to strike water. This land is covered by a network of highways which defy natural drainage patterns.

"How far must suffering and misery go before we see that even in the day of vast cities and powerful machines, the good earth is our mother and that if we destroy her, we destroy ourselves."

—PAUL B. SEARS

ADDITIONAL FLASH! *Dr. Paul Sears is the winner of one of the four Book-of-the-Month Club Fellowships just announced by a jury of eminent critics.*

—ESSANDESS

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The Compleat Collector

(*Continued from preceding page*)

ubiquitous phenomena of gentility, of morality, of approximate culture in America, and it would so continue through the Civil War, reaching the height of its popularity and influence between 1845 and 1855. More than a thousand of these elaborately dight miscellanies are of record; the longest-lived among them endured for seventeen years; many lasted for a dozen or more; one attained a circulation of ten thousand—and that at $2.50 in least ornate form, $4.50 in most. The annuals were expensively produced; the cost of illustration regularly ran far ahead of the outlay for letterpress, usually in the proportion of three to one, sometimes higher. The annuals printed some of the most highly concentrated sentimental slop ever poured on paper: they printed, too, contributions by the giants of their day. Mr. Thompson, who has done his work so thoroughly and competently that he can venture a negative conclusion which one is ready to accept, records that of the writers of reputation who reached maturity by 1845 or earlier, "only Melville, Thoreau, and Whitman escaped—and one cannot be sure that their work does not hide under pseudonymity or anonymity in any of a dozen volumes." The Olympian Cooper, exponent of neither brevity nor mush, permitted fragments of "The Spy" to appear in the *Gem of the Season;* Emerson, Poe, and Longfellow lent distinction to a single volume of the *Gift;* Hawthorne, with twenty-seven contributions to the *Token*, was a veritable professional annualist.

The gift book, obviously, regarded as either social manifestation or artistic vehicle, is a highly important chapter in publishing history. Why previous investigators have neglected it is inexplicable. One suspects that they did not so much neglect it as overstep it, for Mr. Thompson has compressed into convenient compass the result of what must have been an appalling amount of grubbing. His summary of the gift annual's history and his selective study of the most significant annuals is followed by a detailed alphabetical listing that is modestly labelled "A Catalog."

Learning for Ladies

"Whatever thinges men can understande, the self same can women understande also," wrote Baldassare Castiglione four hundred years since, which revolutionary declaration entitles his "Courtier" to first place in a notable exhibition of "Learning for Ladies" arranged by the Huntington Library at San Marino, California. Nearly two centuries after Castiglione, Daniel Defoe, in his "Essays Upon Projects," went even further out on the same limb: "We reproach the Sex every day with Folly and Impertinence, while I am confident, had they the advantages of Education equal to us, they would be guilty of less than ourselves." But a long, empty road stretched ahead before Mary Wollstonecraft charged down with her "Vindication of the Rights of Women" (1792), to be followed at shorter intervals by Hannah More, Frances Wright, Emma Willard, Mary Lyon, Catherine Beecher, Mother Seton, and Elizabeth Blackwell, among others. And in 1894 Gertrude G. de Aguirre published "Women in the Business World," by "One of Them," and the ghost of Castiglione grinned its satisfaction. A sixteen-page pamphlet description of the exhibition, which covers the period from 1508 to 1895 and gives a brief running description of 24 books, has been prepared for the library by Merle Eugene Curti, Dwight Morrow, professor of history at Smith College (10 cents).

PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientèle; exchange and barter of literary property or literary services; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, travelling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature; expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). All advertisements must be consonant with the purposes and character of The Saturday Review. Rates: 7 cents per word, including signature. Count two additional words for Box and Number. Payment in full must be received ten days in advance of publication. Address Personal Dept., Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

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STANFORD'S HARDIN CRAIG has authored "The Enchanted Glass." "Enchanted Merry-Go-Round" is better, for if one finishes it one must begin it again to learn what it is about. Doctor Craig announced over the radio that all who did not agree with him about the Stratford theory were not clear thinkers. After plugging through the Doctor's book, I think I understand. I forgive and will try to forget. George Frisbee.

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■	1-X	2-N	3-S	■	4-A	5-M	6-S	■	7-C	■	8-E	9-V	10-M	11-D	■	12-S
13-P	14-K	15-H	16-X	17-B	18-T	■	19-D	20-J	21-C	■	22-P	23-U	24-V	25-X	26-H	27-Q
■	28-C	29-B	■	30-Q	31-O	32-A	33-T	■	34-O	35-K	36-D	37-P	38-Q	39-A	40-W	41-E
42-R	■	43-J	44-S	45-L	46-A	■	47-N	48-G	49-V	50-Q	51-U	■	52-P	53-E	54-C	■
55-B	56-T	57-J	■	58-I	59-N	60-J	61-K	62-X	63-D	■	64-H	65-A	66-R	■	67-T	68-E
69-B	■	70-J	71-W	72-B	73-F	74-I	75-K	■	76-R	77-L	78-H	■	79-N	80-G	81-O	■
82-P	83-M	84-A	85-O	86-J	87-B	88-N	89-C	■	90-U	91-L	92-K	■	93-F	94-X	95-T	■
96-J	97-U	98-P	99-R	100-N	101-X	■	102-H	103-S	104-L	■	105-C	■	106-S	107-K	108-Q	■
109-G	110-E	111-F	112-T	■	113-A	114-V	115-O	116-R	117-B	118-P	119-M	■	120-N	121-C	122-P	123-I
124-V	■	125-D	126-C	127-X	128-U	129-H	■	130-J	131-E	132-F	■	133-Q	134-D	135-R	136-W	137-N
■	138-C	139-S	140-T	■	141-D	142-P	143-M	144-I	145-J	146-Q	■	147-O	148-H	149-V	150-I	151-E
■	152-M	153-H	154-W	155-X	156-R	157-E	■	158-T	159-G	■	160-O	161-E	162-M	163-P	164-W	165-N
166-I	■	167-T	168-U	■	169-A	170-V	■	171-R	172-N	173-I	174-H	175-B	■	■	■	■

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-four words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's International Dictionary.

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 24 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Book by Washington Irving.

B. Arising.

C. One who holds that the self alone exists.

D. English poet (1613-1649).

E. Travel by means of rides in passing automobiles.

F. Deification of the first mortal to die (Hindu).

G. Mother of Apollo.

H. Ignorant.

I. In one way or another.

J. Character in "Taming of the Shrew."

K. Fester.

L. Holy Roman Emperor (962-973).

M. Variegated.

N. Without endeavor.

O. Prate.

P. Members of South African race.

Q. Malicious grudging.

R. Unmanageably ponderous.

S. Character in "Merry Wives of Windsor."

T. Novel by Scott.

U. Distance from shore.

V. Everlasting.

W. Form of fiction.

X. Ascertain by critical scrutiny.

WORDS

A.	65	32	46	39	169	113	84	4	
B.	17	72	69	87	175	117	29	55	
C.	89	105	126	7	121	54	28	21	138
D.	141	36	125	63	19	134	11		
E.	68	161	151	41	131	110	53	8	157
F.	132	93	73	111					
G.	48	159	109	80					
H.	26	174	64	148	78	15	153	102	129
I.	166	74	144	123	150	173	58		
J.	96	57	130	60	86	70	43	20	145
K.	35	14	75	107	61	92			
L.	91	45	104	77					
M.	143	83	162	119	5	10	152		
N.	88	47	79	59	172	137	2	100	120 165
O.	85	160	34	31	115	147	81		
P.	13	37	22	82	122	163	52	142	98 118
Q.	27	50	133	108	30	146	38		
R.	135	156	171	99	42	76	116	66	
S.	106	139	44	3	6	103	12		
T.	158	140	67	18	167	112	56	33	95
U.	23	90	168	97	128	51			
V.	49	24	124	170	114	9	149		
W.	40	71	154	164	136				
X.	62	155	1	25	94	127	101	16	

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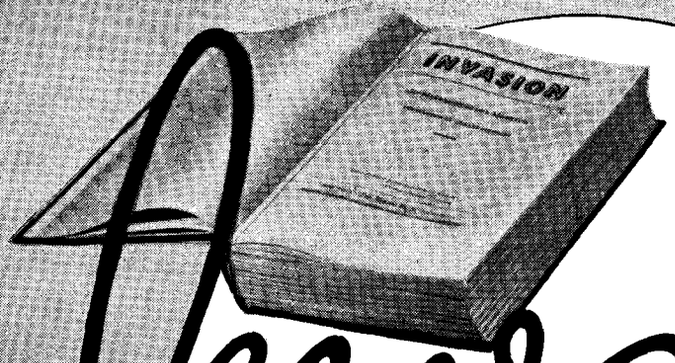

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